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## Both pillars of Nato must stand firm



The fundamental difference between America as a world power and the limited potential of its European partners in the Atlantic pact is readily apparent again.

It isn't just a matter of Colonel Gaddafi, whom President Reagan would like to put in his place on account of Libya's linchpin role in international terrorism.

It is also one of how Washington and the Western Europeans approach continuation of the East-West dialogue.

A Dutch Nato observer once characterised differences in behaviour by saying the United States always tended toward the arrogance of power whereas Western Europe tended toward the arrogance of impotence.

Since President Reagan came to power Washington has indeed consistently sought to remedy what the prevailing conservative US opinion sees as a decline in American prestige.

This purpose is served both by the enormous US arms effort and by a mixture of rhetoric and occasional showing the flag.

Despite the Geneva summit and plans for a second summit meeting between President Reagan and Mr Gorbachov America remains pledged to fight Soviet expansionism and communist ideology.

In Nato too the Americans never tire of pointing out that since Mr Reagan assumed power there has been no expansion of the Soviet sphere of influence or of that of its allies allies from Afghanistan via Ethiopia and Angola to Nicaragua.

"Indeed, American determination has put the Russians on the run," which is in the interest not just of the United States but of the entire Western world, which promises to benefit from America having regained [illegible]

This strength is what mainly brought the Soviet Union back to the Geneva conference table because the Soviet Union is only prepared to give and take when it feels able to respect the other side's strength.

This linear American approach does not alway tally with what the Europeans have learnt and fear, which in turn is a result of their geographic, strategic and historical proximity to Russia and Eastern Europe.

This is frequently apparent in confidential analyses undertaken for the North Atlantic Council.

On this, Nato's governing body, there is plain speaking, with everyone giving his considered opinion, with due consideration for national interests and priorities, and trying to reconcile them with the views of the United States. Political considerations often play a much larger part than strictly military ones because Nato, as secretary-general Lord Carrington never tires of repeating, must be seen both as a defence community and as a means of articulating a joint political will.

Differences of viewpoint and interpretation between America and its partners have recurred regularly ever since Nato was founded, politicians in Brussels say.

It hasn't just been a matter of the consequences of changes in US strategic doctrine for the protection of Europe but also one of the alliance's political role.

In the final analysis the dispute has always ended in a consensus based on the realisation that the most successful pact in recent history serves common values and a common viewpoint on protecting freedom.

That does not, of course, rule out the periodic possibility of US national priorities occasionally differing from those of its partners and, above all, of the inner sealant consisting less of idealistic considerations than of hard-and-fast interests.

The Harmel Report, still an article of Nato faith, says that the pact has a twofold task: that of credibly safeguarding its treaty area from Warsaw Pact attacks and of keeping a hand outstretched to the East.

This dual role lends a political dimension to a pact founded out of military necessity.

It also lent greater importance to the domestic policy considerations of individual Nato partners, considerations that at times seemed to outweigh the requirements of Nato's main military objectives.

Given the current trends, many a Nato pundit in Brussels will wonder whether pursuing a genuine alliance [illegible] growing influence of domestic affairs.

Eyes are cast mainly in the direction of the Federal Republic of Germany as Nato's mainstay (other than the United States, that is).

Nato can only be effective if its members are agreed on crucial political and strategic issues. Fear keeps poor coun-

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**South Korean leader in Bonn**

**President Chun Doo Hwan of South Korea and his wife (centre) are welcomed to Villa Hammerschmidt in Bonn by Federal President Richard von Weizsäcker (right) and his wife Marianne (left).** (Photo: AP)

## Kohl appeals to superpowers to come to terms

Mannheimer MORGEN

A striking feature of Chancellor Kohl's 11 April Bonn press conference was that he urged Washington to go for East-West peace, not sabre-rattling with Colonel Gaddafi.

The Bonn government can well appreciate US feelings but sees a distinction between fighting terrorism and taking military retaliation.

If the Americans were to ask Helmut Kohl for his advice he would tell them to consider the beginning and the end.

But given the reluctance of America's allies to handle the Libyan leader with anything other than kid gloves even in economic policy, the US government is unlikely to consult Europe before embarking on military moves.

While fully realising that the United States as a world power cannot afford to allow itself to be constantly made a laughing stock, Bonn is increasingly worried that the unpredictable Libyan leader might, with his provocation, succeed in upstaging the East-West talks in Geneva.

Never before has Chancellor Kohl so insistently urged Bonn's own main ally, the United States, to take specific steps toward disarmament. Bonn's public appreciation of Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachov's "new approach" that has set "things in motion" makes it clear that Herr Kohl's appeal to "both superpowers" to make progress toward each other on issues and not just in spectacular declarations is aimed mainly at Washington.

It was unusual to hear from Helmut Kohl not only that the experts on both sides must put the run-up to the next summit to good use but that it was "our job" to articulate German interests in Nato.

The Chancellor did just that in several respects, calling for a test ban treaty as a step in the direction of nuclear disarmament with the final target of abolishing it entirely.

He called for disarmament moves to include shorter-range nuclear systems, including Soviet systems stationed in Asia.

Even before an international agreement on the abolition of chemical weapons he made it clear that Bonn would hear nothing of new US chemical weapons being stockpiled in Germany.

The Chancellor's all-or-nothing policy may be taken as a critical remark aimed at both the US and Soviet leaders.

*Rudi Kilgi*

(Mannheimer Morgen, 12 April)

## IN THIS ISSUE

■ WORLD AFFAIRS

# Transatlantic trade clash is unlikely to lead to war

DEUTSCHES ALLGEMEINES
SONNTAGSBLATT

Western Europe and the United States are not always on the best of terms. Since Vietnam and Watergate Europeans have from time to time felt confronted by C. Wright Mills' Ugly American.

US politicians have been irritated by the new feeling of European self-assurance that took shape at roughly the same time.

There are, in contrast, few objective reasons for misunderstanding between Americans and Europeans and their respective politicians.

Even if President Reagan and his West coast brigade prefer to consider first America, then the Pacific rather than Europe, there still need hardly be clashes.

But there are, and mainly in connection with military matters and free trade. The United States as a superpower expects the Europeans to follow every little twist and turn of US strategy even on arms in outer space.

It also expects the Europeans to take as liberal a view of international trade as the US government itself purports to espouse.

So clashes invariably occur in world *trade when what are felt to be threatened industries*, such as steel and agriculture, appear to be in danger.

The United States recently threatened to impose punitive tariffs on imports from the European Community if Spain and Portugal, new members of the Common Market, increased their import tariffs, which by European Community rules they must.

European Community heads of government have succeeded after complex negotiations in agreeing on membership terms for Spain and Portugal, inevitably with international political consequences.

The Community has its Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), which cannot be to the liking of any country keen to export its own agricultural produce to Europe.

American farm exports to Spain and Portugal used only to have to scale a 20-per-cent tariff barrier, so European Community tariffs are not at all welcome.

Spain and Portugal now impose CAP tariffs of up to 100 per cent. That, says Washington, is unacceptable.

If the Common Market countries are not prepared to reach a compromise, in other words agree to a tariff reduction, with the United States, America will submit a list of European agricultural imports on which it could impose punitive tariffs.

They range from whisky, beer and cured ham to wine, cheese, olives and boiled ham: something from every climate zone in the European Community.

The European Commission promptly drew up counter-counter-measures as though two fleets faced each other in full line of battle.

Sanctions, retaliation and whatever other term may be preferred can be escalated by either side with the sole effect that consumers on both sides of the Atlantic will have to pay more.

The Americans prefer to disregard the fact that many Spanish and Portuguese industrial tariffs are to be scrapped now the Iberian countries have joined the European Community.

America may not, of course, stand to gain so much from these tariff reductions inasmuch as General Motors and Ford have long had production facilities of their own in Spain.

Aircraft manufacturers such as Boeing can sell their monopoly products, such as the Jumbo jet, regardless of tariff barriers.

What worries the Americans is the interests of US farmers, a hard-nosed lobby who have so far succeeded in enlisting the support of every US President.

The latest trade war between two leading free trade zones, begun with the heavy artillery, amounts to yet another fdight between subsidised agricultural systems.

The European agricultural market is well known to be a consumer-hostile, centrally-run mammoth institution outdone only by the centrally-administered communist economies in its outmoded system of accounts.

The situation is little better in the United States, where much of the substantial Federal budget deficit has been run up because farm subsidies for and against just about everything have not been scrapped even by free trader Ronald Reagan.

On both sides of the Atlantic the farm lobby has set up a closed shop similar to the mediaeval guild system and just as inflexible.

Competition, the credo of every liberal economic system, is alien to the system.

Compared with other conditions in affluent America, Europe and Japan the agricultural market structure has much in common with the Munich Opera or the Hamburg Schauspielhaus. Both are subsidised to the hilt and a costly reminder of the 19th century.

So it would be absurd if cries of outrage from the farming lobby, this time in the United States, were to harm what are basically sound transatlantic economic ties.

When the smoke has cleared it will soon be seen that the farmers have only done as much damage as industrial and capital interests on both sides of the Atlantic were prepared to tolerate.

No politician in either the United States or Western Europe will be prepared to let matters come to such a head that agricultural market practices, so hostile to competition, are taken over in industrial markets too.

America and Europe are industrial, not agrarian economies. Both are governed by politicians who are bound to abide by pragmatism. So the farm market hysterics will soon be toned down.

*Dieter Fuchs*

(Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt, Hamburg, 13 April 1986)

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sel. Hesitation does not impress Washington. *Procrastination heightens* American tendencies to accuse the Europeans of lack of resolve.

The Americans may also accuse Europe, unfairly, of not contributing enough, in material terms, to its own defence.

This kind of talk heightens the inclination to hold summit talks with the Soviet Union on a superpower-to-superpower basis.

France, having quit the integrated Nato command 20 years ago, retains the luxury privilege of being able, from its special vantage-point, to accuse Nato from time to time of lacking truly European resolve.

This special status is also why it is often French representatives in the North Atlantic Council who voice misgivings others may be reluctant to articulate for fear of a reduction in US protection.

European Nato countries do not doubt for a moment that it would be useful if Europe were to speak more boldly with one voice, especially in view of the greater self-assurance of President Reagan's America.

The Euro Group, set up in 1968 to coordinate and strengthen effective joint defence, has yet to gain more than a modicum of political importance over and above its technical role.

This has been readily apparent in the discussion of East-West issues such as the conceivable consequences of the American SDI programme or the search for effective joint steps to fight terrorism.

It is also evident in the continued difficulty European Nato countries have in coming to terms with what Henry Kissinger once called America's "quest for the new."

Instead of seeing continuity in the broad outlines of US foreign policy since 1945, practical policy changes from one US administration to the next are felt to upset a system that ought, as Europe sees it, to abide by the classic rules of politics and diplomacy.

In the final analysis, as experienced Nato politicians admit, it amounts to envy of the United States for being capable, by virtue of its size and strength, of much more far-reaching renewal than is possible on the Continent.

Yet neither the arrogance of power nor its mirror image, the arrogance of impotence, are of any further assistance.

Europe remains immediately affects by the progress of US-Soviet talks. The Libyan trouble spot remains beneath Nato's southern flank.

Europe is threatened in equal measure by the risk of an uncontrolled arms build-up by both superpowers and by an expansion of what is arguably the most dangerous form of conflict in this day and age: terrorism.

In the circumstances Nato, it is agreed in Brussels, remains the best forum in which to arrive at joint resolutions.

It has a crucial part to play both in a realistic search for controlled East-West detente and in coming to terms with the new dangers.

Otherwise Western Europe can only backslide into neutralism, which would make the Continent a glacis of Soviet power.

America can as little live without the eastern bulwark on the opposite side of the Atlantic basin as Europe can afford to dispense with the US nuclear shield, there being no substitute for America's deterrent potential.

So it is more important than ever to keep the two pillars together.

That presupposes, as experts say in Brussels, plain speaking when needed. America as a world is more likely to take its partners' interests seriously and incorporate them in US policy if their case is stated credibly.

*Jan Reifenberg*

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 12 April 1986)

# Bonn avoids clean break with Gaddafi

In declaring two medium-rank officials of the Libyan people's bureau, or embassy, persona non grata and ordering their expulsion Bonn did the least it could in every respect.

Even in making a move designed to suit the US government Bonn has shown that German interests exist and that they are not identical with those of the United States.

Chancellor Kohl may have proclaimed that "we will not allow our American friends to be bombed or terrorised out," but that was merely a smoke-screen insufficient to conceal the difference of opinion.

There was a very real background to the determined way in which the Bonn government insisted there was no direct link between the bombing of a Berlin discotheque and the expulsion of the Libyan diplomats.

The coalition was keen to *avoid at all* costs creating the impression that it was obliging the United States.

No attention was paid to the call by US ambassador Richard Burt for the Libyan people's bureau in Bonn to be shut down entirely, while US pointers to links between Libyans in Bonn and the bomb raid in Berlin were dismissed as "assertions."

Bonn dismissed any such idea, conceding only that there might be a link with the Libyan embassy in East Berlin. As for economic sanctions against Libya, another point America is keen on, Bonn never as much as mentioned them.

This attitude is bound to prompt disappointment, if not worse, in the Reagan administration now it has declared Colonel Gaddafi its arch-enemy. So yet another mortgage weighs heavily on German-American ties.

But as always with mortgages, there are times when one has to be raised to achieve a given objective, and at present the aim is to avoid a clean break with Libya.

It little matters whether economic interests or considerations of a more general political nature are paramount.

Bonn clearly hopes that Tripoli will take the point. By stressing that the decision to expel the *Libyan diplomats* was its own, Bonn sought to relieve the move of some of its inevitable odium.

The two diplomats are said to have been in breach of their diplomatic privilege, which is surely a point that carries some weight.

Fielding nothing but the legal argument that there is evidence but no proof of Libya being to blame, sounds an extremely unprofessional [illegible]

*[illegible] von Glinski*

([illegible] Merkur/Christ und Welt, Bonn, 12 April 1986)

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■ HOME AFFAIRS

# Problems beset all parties in general election run-up




All parties have drawn up campaign strategies for next January's general election but they still have their election worries.

Targets have been set too high to be reached with ease and ranks are not yet closed and serried.

Some parties have their work cut out creating at least an impression of unity and cohesion.

The Social Democrats would soonest gain an absolute majority, which is definitely wishful thinking as matters stand.

The Christian Democrats would soonest not lose ground so as not to lay themselves open to too much pressure from their coalition partners the Free Democrats, but their supporters are worried the CDU may face losses.

The Free Democrats have unrealistic visions of drawing level with, or even outperforming, the Christian Social Union, Franz Josef Strauss's Bavarian wing of the CDU, and then playing an even more decisive "tail-wagging" role in the Bonn coalition.

The Greens, while not wanting to woo the Social Democrats, would like to persuade voters they are reformers and potential coalition partners capable of being content with gradual progress.

*What the FDP*, the Liberals, hope will see them first past their particular post is no secret. They see themselves as the guardians of the grail of Ludwig Erhard's free market economy and not just a business party.

Sound economic policies, they argue, make social or welfare policies superfluous. So much for the theory. It is almost ideally advocated by Otto Lambsdorff, the former Economic Affairs Minister.

But his successor Martin Bangemann, the present FDP leader, is the man who will inevitably present FDP policy, and his popularity is not the best.

He stands to gain nothing by adding a few bows from Ronald Reagan's quiver to the Erhard-style free market economy.

For one, this predominantly economic orientation, to the neglect of social considerations, is not even to the liking of all Free Democrats.

For another, committed erstwhile Liberal supporters of the coalition with the SPD such as Gerhard Baum, Burkhard Hirsch and Hildegard Hamm-Brücher dislike seeing the FDP relegate to a back-seat role its function as a watchdog of constitutional government and the rule of law.

So they call for a strong ecological accentuation. Environmental protection and technology ought to feature more importantly in Liberal policy, they argue.

Neither environmental protection nor environmental technology are barriers to investment, so they will do the *economy no harm* and be to everyone's benefit.

Free Democrats of this persuasion are unlikely to be wildly enthusiastic about FDP leader Bangemann. He may radiate optimism and sound bright and unjaded, but he speaks out too unhesitatingly and might do better to think before he talks.

The Christian Democrats are having trouble with their old problem, the clash between the CDU and the CSU. Herr Strauss constantly calls for the change in domestic and legal policies promised when the present coalition came to power in October 1982.

Prompt and determined leadership, clear decisions and definite aims and objectives are badly needed. The CDU leader, Chancellor Kohl, could not provide them even if he were not the man he is.

He needs the Free Democrats: not just to make sure of a coalition majority at the polls but also to keep the CSU at bay.

Yet the CDU would no more like to see the FDP too powerful than the CSU would.

If the Free Democrats were to gain too heavily at the polls the trouble the Christian Democrats already have with Herr Bangemann and his associates would be compounded and Herr Strauss would have even better reason for grousing in interviews and in articles in the CSU weekly *Bayernkurier*.

These points are problematic enough for campaign strategists at the Konrad-Adenauer-Haus, CDU headquarters in Bonn. But their greatest handicap is the man who ought to be their greatest asset, Chancellor Kohl.

The Chancellor is not popular enough for the CDU to lead its campaign with the slogan "It's the Chancellor who counts." It probably isn't; the party who backs him is more likely to matter.

The Social Democrats can have greater cause for satisfaction on this account. Their Shadow Chancellor, North Rhine-Westphalian Premier Johannes Rau, has yet to bear the battle scars of political commitments in Bonn.

He creates a cheerful, unworried impression. He only occasionally makes policy points of his own. He puts in a fair amount of travel to gain experience and recognition in foreign policy.

He is saving his strength for the war of attrition that is sure to take its relentless toll once the campaign starts in earnest after the summer recess.

But that is as far as the SPD's advantages go. Time and again leading Social Democrats who cannot be denied competence and specialised knowledge sound a critical note.

Saar Premier Oskar Lafontaine, for instance, has called for a withdrawal from the integrated Nato military command. This is a point on which the national executive must quickly put the record straight, and Herr Rau has had his associates do so.

Economic policy eager beavers are also at work, such as Friedhelm Farthmann, SPD leader in the North Rhine-Westphalian state assembly and Herr Rau's one-time rival for the SPD leadership.

Herr Farthmann's economic policy paper has virtually slashed to ribbons the compromise painstakingly put together by Wolfgang Roth, SPD parliamentary party spokesman in Bonn.

Herr Farthmann says the free market economy has been reduced to absurdity, which is why the state must constantly intervene and maintain a continuous presence. This is a policy line that suits neither Herr Rau nor the SPD campaign approach.

Social Democratic economic policy is to be free market-orientated but with more intensive use of overall control than the right-wing coalition would be either willing or able to do.

A further problem the Social Democrats are reluctant to discuss is that they will have virtually no potential coalition partners even if they make convincing headway at the polls.

Johannes Rau has decided not to consider a coalition with the Greens. He cannot afford to follow in Hesse Premier Holger Börner's footsteps and proclaim with a wry grin after the event that he had not meant it dogmatically.

The realist wing that currently holds sway among the Greens would be only too happy to be considered potential coalition partners.

They have lowered their sights and say they could be accomplished step by step, and the fundamentalist wing of the party has not torn the Greens apart as a result either.

The Greens, they argue, no longer

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# Closer result likely in Lower Saxony

Lower Saxon Premier Ernst Albrecht and the CDU no longer seem as sure as they did a few months ago of retaining power with FDP support at the state assembly polls in mid-June.

Some pundits are no longer ruling out the possibility of SPD leader Gerhard Schröder being returned to power with backing from the Greens.

As the election deadline draws nearer the campaign is gaining momentum between the Harz and the North Sea and, unless the signs are deceptive, there has been a perceptible change in the basic tenor of electoral opinion.

This unexpected change has mainly benefited the Social Democrats and the Greens, treated by SPD leader Gerhard Schröder to the whip and carrot treatment.

The CDU no longer seems so sure of itself. Doubts have arisen in the ranks of the party that has held power unchallenged in Hanover for the past 10 years.

It has given the Social Democrats, most of whom had long abandoned hope, a fresh lease of life.

[illegible] opinion cannot yet be quantified. A March opinion poll commissioned by the *Land* government reflects the previous picture.

If elections had been held the following Sunday (the pollsters' invariable question), 48 per cent of Lower Saxon voters questioned would have voted CDU and almost 41 per cent SPD.

Six per cent would have voted Green and four per cent FDP. The Free Democrats invariably fare better on the day than pollsters have previously forecast.

But this March opinion already made it clear the outcome was likely to be narrower than many had imagined. In 1982 the CDU polled a spectacular absolute majority of 50.7 per cent for which Premier Albrecht could claim much of the credit.

The SPD, led by luckless Karl Ravens, polled a poor 36.5 per cent. The Greens, with deep roots in Lower Saxony, polled 6.5 per cent and made it to the state assembly, as did the FDP, with 5.9 per cent, who had been nudged out in 1978 by the Greens' predecessor, the GLU.

There are a number of reasons why voters may be changing their minds, but few have anything to do with local politics. Despite star traits Herr Albrecht is still much more popular than Herr Schröder, whose wilfulness at times takes even his friends by surprise.

The main outside influence is Chancellor Kohl and the Bonn government, who even Christian Democrats reluctantly admit are annoying voters, whatever they do or fail to do.

Herr Schröder says the Chancellor is his best election aide, while Lower Saxon CDU leader Wilfried Hasselmann said some time ago that the CDU would win the state assembly elections if only Herr Kohl lent it no assistance.

Even Herr Albrecht now seems more inclined to stand aloof from the Chancellor.

The farmers' vote is still substantial in Lower Saxony, and dissatisfied farmers are a further handicap the CDU faces.

Most of what the Bonn government has promised them is a distant prospect as most farmers see it, and farmers with their backs to the wall are unmoved by fine words alone.

They don't even have to vote SPD or Green on 15 June. It would be sufficiently catastrophic for the CDU if they abstained.

Herr Albrecht and his party are in a fix. They may have to ask supporters to vote FDP to ensure that the Free Democrats are returned in sufficient strength to form a coalition with a weaker CDU.

To try to retain power with an absolute majority would be to run an incalculable risk.

Ernst Albrecht is particularly annoyed because "Bonn" and the Chancellor seem to fail to have realised that if the CDU lose Lower Saxony they will lose control of the Bundesrat, or Upper House in Bonn.

So it is high time the CDU in Bonn closed ranks and backed the party in Lower Saxony, the argument runs.

Herr Schröder is equally dissatisfied with the backing he has been given by the SPD in Bonn. He is particularly upset that the SPD is concentrating on strengthening Johannes Rau's hand for next year's general election and neglecting him in Lower Saxony.

Social Democrats in Lower Saxony are worried the SPD Shadow Chancellor, Premier Rau of neighbouring North Rhine-Westphalia, may campaign only halfheartedly in the final stage of their election run-up.

If he were to do so it might, of course, be understandable. A Shadow Chancellor will hardly be keen to campaign wholeheartedly in Lower Saxony only to see the SPD come a poor second.

Besides, Herr Rau is strictly opposed to a coalition with the Greens, which Herr Schröder is not. Gerhard Schröder is counting on the Greens to back him in his bid to head the next state government.

*Hans-Peter Sattler*

(Der Tagesspiegel, Berlin, 10 April 1986)

■ SOCIETY

# Conscientious objectors: backbone of the social services for 25 years




When the first conscientious objectors reported for social service duty instead of military service the first Bundeswehr conscripts had been demobilised three years earlier.

Twenty-five years ago, in April 1961, exactly 320 social service jobs had been laid on, few in comparison with over 11,000 applications for exemption from military service (of which over 60 per cent had been granted).

Today 58,000 conscientious objectors work in social service. Without them rescue organisations, hospitals, charities and homes for the sick and aged would have to shut down, or at least to cut back their activities substantially.

Young men who choose to do social service rather than serve in the Bundeswehr may be maligned as shirkers but the service they do society is one that those who disparage them are not going to perform.

UN statistics compiled last year show there to be conscripts serving in the armed forces of 93 of the world's 159 countries, but only 21 acknowledge conscientious objectors.

Legal provisions for conscientious objection are most generous in Western Europe in general and in Holland, Norway and the Federal Republic of Germany in particular.

Conscientious objection to military service is guaranteed in Article 4 of Basic Law, the 1949 Bonn constitution. It is the article that guarantees freedom of belief.

Article 12a, a later addition, says in two sentences what has been a constant cause of political controversy ever since legislation was enacted in January 1960:

"Anyone who objects on grounds of conscience to war service with a weapon can be required to do substitute service. Substitute service must not be for longer than the duration of military service."

So objections to military service are constitutionally upheld solely on grounds of conscience. Until the mid-1970s the prevailing view among politicians and in the legal profession was that these grounds were more or less objectively verifiable.

Conscientious objectors were tested by inspection panels at local authority offices in charge of conscription. Applicants who were turned down could appeal.

Panels and the entire procedure were increasingly criticised. They were said to favour applicants who had a way with words.

Chairmen were arguably prejudiced because some were appointed by the Defence Ministry. Appeals that went the distance could take years.

As a result, objectors who were turned down were obliged to disobey orders as conscripts (which they often were for months before their appeal was heard).

This unsatisfactory, at times humiliating procedure prompted the Social and Free Democratic Bonn coalition to amend the Act in 1977, making an affidavit by the conscript sufficient ground for exemption.

But this arrangement was not to last. Called the postcard provision because it entitled conscripts to exemption from military service for the price of a postcard, it proved too popular.

In 1976 there were 40,618 applicants for conscientious objection; in "postcard year" 1977 there were 70,062.

The Federal Constitutional Court waived the amendment, in force since August 1977, in mid-December that year. On 13 April 1978 the court found the amendment unconstitutional.

It did so mainly because the amendment allowed conscripts a de facto straight choice between military and social service which the constitution was felt not to envisage.

A mere affidavit by the conscript was not a sufficiently clear indication that his decision was based on grounds of conscience.

*The court's ruling included a further* argument that remains extremely controversial. Failing other tests of the applicant's earnest, the constitutional court judges noted, length of service might be considered a guide.

In other words, if social service was for longer than military service, then conscripts who opted for it could reasonably be assumed to be serious in objecting to military service. In effect the court was paving the way for a longer, two-year term of social service.

When Christian Democrat Heiner Geissler took over the portfolio in charge of conscientious objectors, the Family Affairs Ministry, in October 1982 priority was given to new legislation that came into force in January 1984.

Conscientious objectors must now state their case in writing when applying for exemption. The authorities then decide whether to accept their application.

The authorities have so far been generous, turning down only 3,300 out of 72,000 applications.

*Of these, 3,100* were turned down because applications were incomplete, documents not having been submitted even after several reminders.

Soldiers or reservists can still apply to be examined in person by the exemption panel and they can still appeal against a decision that does not go in their favour (although they can no longer appeal to as many courts as in the past).

Length of service is the drawback. Social service is now for one third longer than military service: 20 months rather than 15.

At the end of the decade when conscription is increased from 15 to 18 months social service will be for two years.

This provision would appear on the face of it to be in breach of Basic Law which is one of the main reasons why the Social Democrats and Greens took their case to the Federal Constitutional Court.

But the court found, in keeping with its 1977 ruling, that a longer period of social service merely redressed the balance with conscription plus commitments as reservists.

Yet many youngsters still apply for exemption from military service. Last year's 54,000 applicants was about average for the 1980s. Fluctuations apart, numbers have steadily increased since 1960.

The first major increase, from 5,963 in 1967 to 11,952 in 1968, came in the wake of the Vietnam War. By the mid 1970s applicants averaged 40,000 a year.

Defence Ministry planners were expecting numbers to even out at this level, but last year's 54,000 showed this assumption to have been over-optimistic.

*Kurt Kister*

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich, 10 April 1986)

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want to quit industrial society; they want to transform it, and who doesn't?

But the realists realise that their views on security policy are a virtually insuperable obstacle to joining a Bonn coalition.

That is why they have relegated to the status of a more long-range target resigning from Nato and making the Federal Republic a neutral, non-aligned country.

Here too, they say, a gradual approach might suffice. But Johannes Rau is unmoved. He is resolved to become Bonn Chancellor without Green backing.

With so many problems faced by all, all contenders seem likely to come a cropper at some stage of the campaign.

*Helmut Bauer*

(Nürnberger Nachrichten, 4 April 1986)

# Right of asylum an open sesame for applicants?

The mass media response to last year's 74,000 applicants for political asylum has been that there is a glut, that the boat is full and that applications for political asylum have assumed tourist trade proportions.

The implication is that the Federal Republic has granted asylum to as many applicants as it can handle and that there will just have to be a decline in the number of applicants.

The Bundestag home affairs committee reviewed the position in mid-March after legislation tabled by CDU/CSU-governed *Länder* that envisage further restrictions to the right of asylum.

The assumption is that most applicants are not entitled to political asylum, enter the country illegally and take unfair advantage of asylum procedures.

The churches, welfare organisations and others strongly disagree and have regularly called for the debate to be conducted with less emotion and more objectivity. They say it is nonsense to talk in terms of a glut of asylum applicants.

They reiterated their viewpoint at the Bundestag hearing in Bonn, adding for good measure that the topic must not be allowed to become an election campaign issue.

Twenty-eight experts reviewed an issue Basic Law, the 1949 Bonn constitution, deals with in a single sentence: "Victims of political persecution enjoy the right of asylum."

People without a legal frame of mind will be tempted to accept these words at face value. They will find it hard to see how the experts' views can possibly mount up to a 536-page report.

Yet the numbers of applicants prompted such widely differing figures and interpretations that committee chairman Axel Wernitz, SPD, said not even reliable figures seemed to be available.

Statistics issued last year by the Federal government have been heavily criticised. The representative of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees felt the official total of 605,000 refugees in the Federal Republic was too high.

Government statistics still included 42,000 displaced persons left over from the Second World War. It was misleading still to list them as refugees when they had long since assimilated.

Amnesty International's Reinhard Marx wondered why the number of recognised asylum applicants had remained a steady 52,000 when, with growing numbers of applicants, numbers recognised ought logically to be larger too.

The statistics included many people who no longer existed as refugees because they had either moved on or returned to their countries of origin or were no longer refugees.

The Bill envisaged by the Bundesrat found little favour with legal, academic, church and welfare experts who felt they were not designed to reduce the figure.

Herr Müller of Caritas said the numbers debate was superfluous. Numbers could not be contained by domestic legislation but only, if at all, by international agreement.

Why then was legislation planned if it was going to have no real effect, asked Burkhard Hirsch, FDP.

Asylum procedure was made more stringent in the early 1980s when compulsory visas were introduced for visitors from asylum-seekers' countries of origin.

Applicants were also required to stay in the Federal Republic on lower welfare payments throughout the application processing procedure.

These changes were agreed by Federal and *Länder* politicians after applicants skyrocketed to over 100,000 in 1980.

Numbers have since declined, arguably due mainly to the lifting of martial law in Turkey and the brighter outlook there.

Roughly half the 1980 applicants were Turks determined to go to any length to avoid repatriation.

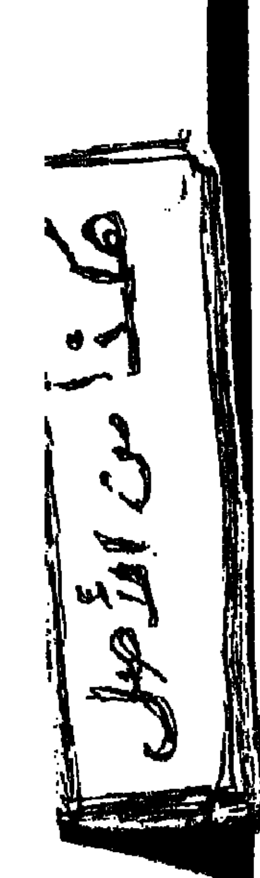
This only goes to show that reasons for the influx of refugees to the industrialised countries are what matter and that legislation alone — short of a revision of Basic Law — will not check them.

Experts from the Speyer college of public administration wondered whether the law of asylum was an open sesame illegally enabling Third World asylum-seekers to enter at leisure.

The facts and figures would seem to indicate that it isn't.

*Franz Smets*

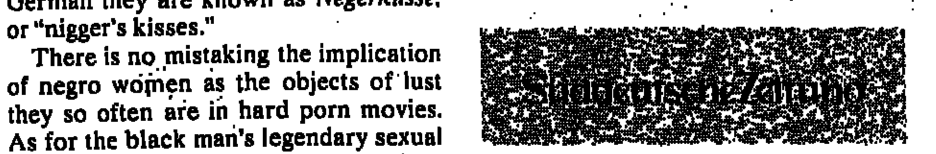
(General-Anzeiger, Bonn, 18 March 1986)





■ RACISM

# European racial discrimination compared at Tutzing




Racism was discussed by representatives of minorities at the receiving end of racial discrimination in Europe at a conference held by the Protestant Academy in Tutzing, Bavaria.

Would you think of racial discrimination when eating a chocolate marshmallow? If you were German you might. In German they are known as *Negerküsse*, or "nigger's kisses."

There is no mistaking the implication of negro women as the objects of lust they so often are in hard porn movies. As for the black man's legendary sexual prowess, it is a fear and prejudice that is still alive and well.

So are fears of the Italians who are robbing us of "our" jobs and of the Turks who are only here for "our" welfare state and "our" women. Not to mention fears of Germany and German culture being overwhelmed by alien influences.

It was heartening to see at Tutzing how differently Germans and foreigners viewed the subject. Germans, with memories of Third Reich genocide, drew a subtle distinction between racism and xenophobia. Victims of discrimination were not much worried about definitions.

Paul Boateng, a Briton who works for *an anti-racism* programme of the World Council of Churches, said he felt it was hardly worthwhile discussing on board a sinking ship whether the predicament was due to a hurricane or to a typhoon.

His definition of racism was a comprehensive one: the interplay of power and prejudice that maintained the supremacy of one group at another's expense.

He should know, looking after a parish in Brixton, South London, where 66 per cent of coloured youngsters are registered unemployed.

After the Brixton riots a few years ago Mrs Thatcher's Tory government axed funds for underprivileged coloured people and dismissed the churches' counter-proposals as sheer Marxism.

Everyday racism in Britain, France and Holland was discussed at Tutzing, and it was clear that in all three countries a struggle is in progress between the erstwhile colonisers and colonised for a share of prosperity in the mother country.

The situation in Germany was not ignored, so readily did parallels come to mind. Raids on foreigners' homes, the murder of a Turk in Hamburg and the growing number of foreigners who have abandoned hope are surely food for thought.

June Givanni, whose mother was born in Guayana and came to Britain as a nurse in 1953, said her family had been brought over to help build a better Britain.

The status of coloured citizens was *now* being changed retroactively to their disadvantage while whites from Canada and Australia were given preferential treatment. Comparison with the situation in Germany was self-evident. The millionth "guest worker" was welcomed to Germany in 1961 and migrants have since grown roots here.

Unemployment hit them disproportionately hard. Those who applied for unemployment benefit were often deported.

June Givanni's comment "It was now our duty to go" applied in equal measure to aliens in the Federal Republic.

A report submitted by a commission of enquiry to the European Parliament at the end of last year also sounds an alarming note. It deals with the resurgence of fascism and racism in Europe.

The conclusion it reaches is that the activities of right-wing extremist groups must be closely monitored because of the risk of violence.

But the emergence of more or less diffuse feelings of xenophobia is even more alarming, the report says. Immigrant groups are hardest hit by this phenomenon.

They experience "daily signs of mistrust and hostility, and despite legislative effort encounter constant discrimination in the search for work and a home and in the use of social services."

In Germany "legislative efforts" have lately consisted mainly of bids to prevent migrant workers from bringing their families over here and to encourage them to repatriate.

Interior Minister Friedrich Zimmermann was keen to allow only children under the age of six to join their families in Germany. His plans were foiled by the opposition of the Free Democrats, junior partners in the Bonn coalition, and the churches.

Free Democrat Liselotte Funcke, Federal government commissioner for foreigners' affairs, told the Tutzing conference she had successfully been able to point out that no other country had such strict regulations.

Yet she was not in favour of a key demand made by Tutzing working parties (and the European Parliament committee): the call for anti-discrimination legislation.

Frau Funcke felt criminal proceedings against discrimination and disparaging comments might do more harm than good. An appropriate public response would certainly be preferable.

No-one at Tutzing shared her confidence in the good sense of the general public. Continued high unemployment was felt to fuel the fires of scapegoat theories.

Politicians in their election campaigns were not always able to resist the temptation to oversimplify and falsify the picture.

Christian Democrat Heinrich Lummer, Interior Senator in Berlin, has suggested abolishing the constitutional right of asylum. Jürgen Miksch, deputy head of the Tutzing academy, said the level to which a Christian party had sunk was appalling.

Legislation might not, as Frau Funcke said, change people's views. But how else was xenophobia to be fought?

The 300-odd Christian churches represented in the World Council of Churches are undoubtedly a major, internationally organised bulwark against racism and xenophobia, the conference was told.

Programmes aimed at helping racially oppressed people have been drawn up by the WCC since 1969.

In Western Europe the emphasis is on migrant workers, on Africans, Asians, South and Central Americans returning to their "mother countries" and on ethnic minorities such as the Lapps in Norway and the Romanies in Germany.

*The churches in Germany have made* a point of opposing oppression of Romanies, but they can hardly claim to have made much impression on the general public.

Mention was made at Tutzing of self-help groups in Britain, France and Holland that had taken up the everyday fight against racism and hatred of foreigners.

Demands have been made everywhere for foreign residents to be given the right to vote in local government elections, but only Holland has yet done so in the European Community.

Trade union support has been enlisted even though the unions are not, in Europe, ideally suited to serve this purpose. The smaller a union is, the more determined it must be to defend its members' privileges, and foreigners can seriously jeopardise them.

It took time for the trade unions to realise that it was their duty to help the underprivileged in industrialised society regardless of race and nationality. Tutzing made it clear how difficult the unions still find this process of adjustment when trade union representatives were confronted with the demand for foreigners to be represented on union executive bodies in keeping with their union membership.

Karl-Heinz Goebels of the national executive of the DGB, Germany's Düsseldorf-based trades union confederation, was unmistakably annoyed. The work that really mattered, he said, was done at the grass-roots level.

Even so, there are trade union campaigns in Germany that could make a world of difference. The *Mach meinen Kumpel nicht an* campaign was launched by the DGB youth movement.

It was modelled on the French *Touche pas à mon pote* campaign, which was organised by self-help groups.

These groups play an important role in Holland too, where racial minorities with church backing run courses for "white aborigines."

They are an experiment testifying to a new sense of self-assurance among the oppressed, a trend reminiscent in many ways of the women's movement.

A young woman from Surinam, explaining the concept, says blacks help whites to free themselves. Many Dutch people attend these weekend courses without realising what they are letting themselves in for.

They then find themselves in the operating theatre and are taught to realise what racist prejudice they have come to accept in their process of socialisation. Only once they have realised this fact does joint work in public begin.

"The best way to find out what happens is to attend a course," said a Dutchman in Tutzing. "It's amazing how much these three days can change you," he felt.

It will be a while before Turks in Ger*many can hold courses to show Germans* what it's like to be at the receiving end of racial discrimination. That would presuppose more children from Islamic families going to high school and university. At present their number is virtually nil.

Neither Turks in Germany nor Moroccans in France stand to benefit from the goodwill shown by liberal clergymen.

"It's all very well demonstrating against the evils of apartheid," Boateng said, "without seeing the extent to which you yourself are to blame."

The WCC has closed its accounts with three banks, including Dresdner Bank in Germany, that have funded loans to the South African government.

As the Church Council on Migrant Workers in Europe puts it: "Sympathy for people affected by racism is no substitute for a strategy to eliminate practices of oppression, be they conscious or unconscious."

*Wolfgang Roth*

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich, 13 March 1986)




(Photo: Manfred Vollmer)

■ HANOVER FAIR

# Robots essential if industry is to maintain productivity and create jobs

Division of the Hanover Fair into two separate events, the CeBIT office equipment and computer fair (12-19 March) and the traditional industrial fair (9-16 April), was not popular with all exhibitors and visitors.

Many felt the "fair of fairs" might now just become a "normal" exhibition like any other and lose its unique character.

The second part of this first-ever two-stage fair opened its gates to an expected 350,000 to 400,000 visitors.

There are exhibitors who feel that communications technology is not an essential part of an industrial fair.

Alfred Selbach, chairman of German industry's fair and exhibition committee and a director of plant and equipment manufacturer Brown, Boveri & Cie (BBC), summed up this attitude as follows:

"The field of communication is less important than industrial production itself, and accompanies and alleviates the process of production. This is why it makes sense to give this field its own exhibition. Each field has its own market needs."

There are also many practical reasons for splitting the Fair into two distinct stages.

Both exhibitors and visitors have now got more space and less noise.

Between 50 and 60 firms will be represented at both CeBIT and the industrial fair, among them Siemens and Philips.

But is the Hanover Fair still a business barometer? Certainly not for the mechanical engineering sector.

The big specialist exhibitions such as BAUMA (the world's largest exhibition of construction machinery and building materials), DRUPA (printing and publishing) or METAV (production engineering, automation and new materials) have become more important in this respect.

As opposed to the situation at these exhibitions, exhibitors at Hanover are not expecting spectacular business deals.

A spokesman for the Mannesmann AG referred to the industrial fair as a "contact fair" where firms have the opportunity to take a look around and gather information.

Contracts may of course result in the long run. Decisions, however, are no longer taken straight away. Many firms feel that PR effects are very important.

"We just cannot afford to stay away from Hanover", said a spokesman for the Thyssen group.

Together with Henschel, Thyssen will be demonstrating a jointly developed magnetic suspension railway and other impressive products, such as a 61-ton hook which can lift up structural components weighing up to 5,000 tons and is planned for use on oil rigs.

The German mechanical engineering sector is currently being inundated with orders. This branch had a turnover of DM162bn last year. Capacity utilisation is almost 90 per cent.

This sector has not failed to revolutionise production technology via the use of microelectronics. The robots are definitely on the match. Last year 2,400 industrial robots were produced in Germany, as opposed to 2,100 in 1984 and 1,200 in 1981.

8,800 robots are already in use in Germany in comparison with only 2,100 in 1981.

Exports by German mechanical engineering and plant and equipment manu-

RHEINISCHER MERKUR

facturers increased by almost DM20bn to DM93bn within the space of two years. Last year's export surplus amounted to DM55bn.

The Germans are the world's top exporters in every second specialist mechanical engineering and plant and equipment field.

The steep fall in oil prices has also enabled the capital goods sector to pick up.

At the same time, however, this development has worsened prospects for new energy-saving technologies such as solar technology and heat pumps.

Branches of industry connected with construction activities are also finding life difficult in view of the slump in the construction industry. Firms which have specialised in environmental protection installations, on the other hand, are doing well.

The numerous regulations on dedusting and desulphurising for municipalities ensure a steady demand in this field.

All branches dealing with the rationalisation of work flows are also riding on the crest of a wave. There's plenty of control engineering on display in Hanover.

One of the fair's major attractions is called "computer integrated manufacturing," the computer-controlled integration of all stages of production from customer ordering to product dispatchment.

All the special wishes of a car buyer, for example, from the colour of the upholstery to the fog lamp, are keyed into a terminal. The materials required are then automatically provided.

As a result there are fewer delays, less loss of materials, and greater precision when it comes to satisfying the desires of the customer.

This material- and time-saving approach, however, does have snags. The slightest irregularity on the part of one of the subcontractors brings the entire production to a standstill.

This is something the trade unions have realised and they often call a strike at the plant of just one subcontractor, hitting the whole industry and sparing their own strike funds.

This aspect of technological progress played a major role during the recent discussion on the neutrality of the Federal Labour Office during industrial disputes.

In the field of measuring and regulating technology and process and production control the Central Association of the Electrical Industry (ZVEI) expects good results in Hanover.

Many companies are placing particular emphasis on rationalisation and automation.

Last year the electrical engineering industry had a turnover of almost DM153bn, 14.7 per cent up on the previous year's figure.

Measuring and regulating technology had a 20 per cent increase. This kind of increase, however, will not be repeated this year.

The heated discussion on whether machines and robots are no more than jobkillers and a major cause of the unemployment problem has died down recently, particularly in the face of a spectacular increase in the number of jobs in this field.

The fact that Germany has one of the highest international wage levels speeded up this technological progress.

During the past not all entrepreneurs had the capital to make jobs productive enough to be able to recover high personnel costs.

As a result, many were forced to dismiss workers.

It wasn't technological progress, therefore, which led to unemployment but on the contrary the fact that many companies were unable to offset the pressure of high personnel costs with technological advances.

Without such advances, however, the Hanover Fair wouldn't pay off for German industry. It would be hopelessly unable to keep pace with international competition.

The development of the textile industry bears out this point. Without its jet looms, open-end spinners and computer-controlled colouring techniques it would never have stood a chance of survival. These techniques have saved jobs.

The commercial vehicle industry expects good results in Hanover.

MAN, for example, has brought its entire product range along to the fair, among them vehicles with special platforms for the furniture or food and drink industries.

Manufacturers in this field welcome the effects of lower oil prices, which have allowed a great deal of pent-up demand to be released.

MAN achieved a 20 per cent increase in its vehicle output last year (to 21,000 units). This compares with an average increase of 9.5 per cent for the industry as a whole. An increase of between 22 and 23 per cent is expected this year.

Germany's biggest producer of utility vehicles, Daimler-Benz, produced 220,000 vehicles worldwide last year (+ 4.4 per cent).

Daimler will be exhibiting new long distance lorries and new drive techniques in Hanover.

The commercial vehicle sector, however, has suffered from the fact that products from the state-run French company Renault are imported at dumping prices.

A MAN spokesman expressed his firm belief that the exclusion of CeBIT from the industrial fair will have positive effects.

The interest of the public will now concentrate on the other fields.

The Big Three chemicals companies are now only represented in specialist fields in Hanover. They have their own specialist exhibition, A[illegible]MA.

Hoechst [illegible] represented at Hanover, [illegible] example, with its special [illegible]toners for watches, clocks, machines and cogwheels, its industrial ceramics for microchips, it special foils for capacitors and its almost non-inflammable fibres for use in aircraft or theatres.

More and more plastic parts are being used in machines.

Gone are the days when the chemicals industry had its own exhibition halls in Hanover.

Its products can now be found at a variety of stands, e.g. communications technology products, composite materials and research and development.

*Heinrich Rieker*

(Rheinischer Merkur/Christ und Welt, Bonn, 5 April 1986)



■ EMPLOYMENT

# Growth alone will not create jobs, experts tell Bonn

There are good reasons why 1990 seems sure to hold the key to a better future. They are mainly connected with demographic trends, which provide a clear picture of the demand side.

From the end of the decade the number of young people coming onto the job market is sure to decline. From 1990 the heavy birth rate decline of the past 15 years will be fully effective.

The research department of the Federal Labour Office in Nuremberg has arrived at the following figures:

- During the 1980s there will have been a net increase of 1.4 million in the number of people on the job market.
- By the end of the decade the figure will be level-pegging, having reached zero growth.
- During the 1990s there will be a net decline in the labour market of at least 1.6 million people.

This was roughly the position mapped out by Herr Afheldt, from which *Wirtschaftswoche* promptly concluded that by the turn of the century there would be no more unemployment in the Federal Republic.

It later admitted that this conclusion was premature and, in a word, a misinterpretation of the position.

The Prognos forecast is that despite a decline in the number of young newcomers to the job market and a slight increase in the number of jobs available there will still be roughly one million out of work at the end of the century. The premature prophets of full employment all make the same mistake. They concentrate on demographic trends and the undeniable fact that there is going to be a decline in, let us say, demand for jobs.

They concentrate on demand and neglect the supply side: how many jobs will be available and whether other than demographic trends might upset this rose-tinted view of the future.

Wolfgang Klauder, head of the Nuremberg research unit, painted a decidedly gloomy picture some weeks ago. He feels unemployment may well continue unabated or even increase by the turn of the century.

He sees a growing demand for jobs among women and a further influx of migrant workers making the increase in demand worse in the years immediately ahead and reducing the subsequent effect of the decline in demand.

The key factor is the labour reserve, people who would like to work but don't need to do so, and their number is substantial.

Meinhard Miegel of the Economic and Social Policy Institute, Bad Godesberg, says that if people were as keen on working now as they were in the early 1970s the number of people in the job market would be one million higher than it is at present.

So the number of registered unemployed would then in all probability be over three million.

No-one can guarantee that this labour reserve will continue to voluntarily go empty-handed.

It is a reserve easily mobilised, as is shown by the way many women who have not worked for years have no hesitation in registering at the labour exchange when they decide they want to go out to work again.

This factor is particularly important in periods of economic upswing, Dr Miegel says, when the slight increase in the number of jobs available is for the most part met not by hiring people registered as unemployed but by mobilising this reserve.

Heimfried Wolf of Prognos expects this to happen in the years ahead too. "The reserve will be reactivated faster than the rate at which any serious inroad will be made into the numbers unemployed."

The labour reserve is often more flexible, and the unemployed may then tend

DIE ZEIT

to remain a bedrock for whom jobs are hard to find.

The net inflow of migrant workers Herr Klauder mentions may also prove a spanner in the works.

No immediate increase need be expected as a result of Spain and Portugal joining the European Community. Transitional arrangements will effectively keep an Iberian influx at bay for seven years.

But these restrictions will be abolished at the end of 1992. Besides, the problem of migrant workers from Turkey, a country with associate status if not a full member of the Community, has yet to be solved. Pressure on the Community will be heavy. Between 1980 and 2000 Turkey's labour supply is expected to grow by about 10 million people.

Gone are the days when people euphorically felt an end to unemployment might be brought about by continuous growth. Growth rates as in the heady days of post-war economic reconstruction are past history.

It is wildly unrealistic to expect annual growth rates of between five and six per cent to eliminate unemployment automatically, as it were. Realistic growth rates rule out dramatic improvements.

Prognos says that even with a long-term average GNP increase of 2.5 per cent the number of jobs available is likely to be much the same in 2000 as it is today.

This will be due to the effect of productivity, which by definition means fewer people achieving higher output.

To take but one of many examples, a Siemens report on clerical jobs entitled "Büro 1990" sees a substantial rationalisation potential.

In the private sector the report foresees a rationalisation potential of 25 per cent in office and administration jobs. In the public sector it feels 40 per cent of jobs could fall foul of rationalisation.

But long-term forecasts are not much in demand in a booming German economy where recovery and growth have been steady for the past four years. The lower dollar exchange rate and plummeting oil price play a further part in fuelling the fires of official optimism.

"Some people say we no longer need to do anything," says Herr Wolf. "That is too facile a view of the situation."

One reason why this is so is that they are reluctant to learn from past mistakes. Meinhard Miegel makes a pertinent point on unemployment among the young:

"When tens of thousands of young people are unable to find a promising apprenticeship or even to learn a trade at all, there is more to it than mere disorganisation when everyone has known for over a decade how many young people would be coming onto the job market and when."

A further point is that with fewer skilled youngsters coming up the job ladder requalification will increasingly become a must for people aged over 40, as Herr Afheldt puts it.

Herr Klauder says this will have consequences in all policy sectors, but especially in education.

The Federal government in contrast argues that a lasting solution to labour market problems can only be achieved by means of consistent market economy policies.

That sounds suspiciously like leaving matters to the market. The government certainly doesn't seem keen on tackling the task.

*Klaus-Peter Schmid*

(Die Zeit, Hamburg, 28 March 1986)

**Why jobs are scarce**

To produce goods and services worth DM1m* this is how many workers it took in the years indicated:

| 1955 | 1965 | 1975 | 1985 |
|---|---|---|---|
| 39 | 25 | 18 | 14 |

© Globus 5957 — *at 1985 prices

Heik Afheldt of Prognos, the Basle market research firm, forecast in an article in *Wirtschaftswoche*, the Düsseldorf business and economics weekly, drastic changes in the German labour market from 1990.

The number of people in employment, he wrote, will decline rapidly, and with it the demand for jobs, by 1.6 million between 1990 and 2000.

At first glance that would seem to imply the end of unemployment from the beginning of the next decade, until which, as the Bonn government constantly reminds us, the outlook will be one of continuous improvement.

Or, as this year's report of the Council of Economic Advisers to the Bonn government puts it: "At any rate, unemployment will be perceptibly lower this year than last."

Economic Affairs Minister Martin Bangemann expects unemployment to average 2.15 million in 1986; at the end of February the figure was 2.6 million.

The economic report is confident the trend will continue to be one of improvement: "As the demographic influence on the increase in labour supply will decline, a steady increase in the number of jobs available will be heightened by the decline in the number of unemployed."

It could hardly come at a better time for the government. The change for the better in the months ahead will be in the run-up to next January's general election.

The next step, an improvement so drastic as to herald an end to an unemployment rate that has been so alarming for years, will make its presence felt from 1990 — in time for yet another general election. The timing could hardly be better.

■ MONEY

# EMS currency realignment shows the system works

Süddeutsche Zeitung

Currency realignment decisions, made by members of the European Monetary System (EMS), meeting at the Dutch holiday resort of Ootmarsum, mainly favoured the French economy.

A devaluation of the French franc has been needed for some time to strengthen the French economy's competitiveness. As is usual, West Germany will be the main loser.

Behind the facade of European solidarity and the outward signs of Franco-German cooperation, sturdy national interests take pride of place.

Given this background, the West German view of the decisions made by finance ministers and heads of central banks at Ootmarsum is that they were more favourable than expected.

The deutschemark is to be revalued within the EMS by three per cent and the French franc to be devalued by three per cent.

In the last major currency realignment three years ago the mark had to be revalued by 5.5 and the franc devalued by 2.5 per cent.

This spring the Federal Republic did not feel itself to be in such a tight spot, with export surpluses likely to be lower than last year.

The mark's exchange rate gains on the American dollar since last autumn will have a lot to do with this.

Although the dollar has risen slightly against the mark recently, it is still well below the levels of last year.

This "currency dumping" operated to the advantage of West German exporters. But within a year this advantage has been toned down.

The new revaluation of the mark with EMS partners, with whom a half of West German export trade is done, will be a moderate burden on West German exports, but tolerable in view of the economy's stability.

German tourists to France this year will gain a slight advantage from the currency changes.

West German export surpluses, high and permanent, are now being regarded in a new light. The apparent mercantilist high spirits of many economists and politicians, resulting from constant record exports, can obstruct the overall view.

Abroad these surpluses are a permanent source of annoyance, a reason for ever-louder calls for protectionist measures and a worry to many developing countries about their very livelihood.

Certainly West Germany deserves this success resulting from stable economic policies that were and still are much more disciplined than in most other countries.

The currency realignment doesn't mean that the EMS doesn't work. It functions satisfactorily so long as expectations of it are realistic and not exaggerated.

The last major realignment took place three years ago, if the isolated instance of the Italian lira devaluation last summer is not taken into account.

Previous to this there were seven realignments in rapid succession after the establishment of the EMS in 1979.

This should be regarded as a sign of the system's success, albeit limited success. The system has profited from the long period the dollar has been strong and the mark weak, so that the weak currencies in the EMS have remained stable against the German mark.

The most positive effect of the system has been its reduction of inflation rates. In Italy the rate fell from the 15-20 per cent it was three to four years ago to seven per cent last year. In France it fell from 14 per cent in 1981 to 4.7 per cent in 1985.

Other factors have played their part in this, primarily the drop in energy costs. But in every case the sceptics' forecasts that the system would be a new breeding ground for the inflation bacillus have not been fulfilled.

There has been an improvement in cooperation between the central banks. The technical management of the system has improved understanding among EMS partners of each others' motives and has made them more considerate of each other. These advantages were pointed out by Bundesbank president Karl Otto Pöhl.

The weak point of the EMS is the reluctance of the British to join. It is possible that they will look upon joining the EMS more soberly in view of the decline in North Sea oil prices.

Differences in economic policies and varying successes in achieving stability will make it essential to adjust exchange rates from time to time. The idea of a single European currency remains a distant possibility for the time being.

Former Economic Affairs Minister Count Otto Lambsdorff wrote last summer that the political will for the creation of an independent European currency was lacking.

There is also a lack of intent or effort for economic common ground, but the currency system keeps the basics for such a development alive.

*Volker Wörl*

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich, 7 April 1986)

# Zero inflation — but don't take it too easy

Consumer prices in March, measured by the cost of living index, rose only 0.1 per cent compared with the same month last year. The term "inflation rate" is redundant.

Unless all the signs are deceptive the cost of living index for April will be below the level of April last year.

Along with consumer prices industrial products, wholesale prices and exports have all remained stable.

There is cause for delight in this price stability, brought about by the decisive drop in oil prices, the decline in other raw material costs and the devaluation of the dollar, contributing to cheaper imports.

Those who benefit the most from this are workers, pensioners, the unemployed and savers.

Incomes, savings and interest rates will no longer be linked to currency depreciation.

This means for the economy more real demand and growth potential. This is good for our economic situation which is going along nicely anyway.

Investors are delighted. Many of them say that interest rates can only go down, because real interest rates, the actual interest charge on capital markets discounting the inflation rate, is, at six per cent, far too high in their view. Loans will become cheaper.

But there are people who are unhappy about lower prices and the cheaper oil and dollars that are pepping up the economy.

They talk of deflation and cause anxiety about an economic crisis like the one at the beginning of the 1930s.

That is manifestly idiotic. Unlike then the economy is growing. The drop in prices, not just limited to the Federal Republic, can be described with the word the Americans use, disinflation.

For years this has been the aim of all central bankers and politicians.

The Bundesbank and the Bonn government can rejoice that they have conquered inflation. With the 1987 general election in the offing government politicians have been tempted to do so.

But they have not as yet exploited the situation, although citizens' attention will eventually be brought to the country's price stability and the advantages this brings without any doubt.

It remains a moot question whether this is the result of neglect or caution. What is certain is that no one boasts about price stability success for it is not truly merited.

Former German Economic Affairs Minister Karl Schiller is on record as having said that he was enormously mistaken when he said in 1968 that inflation was stone dead. Anyone who says the same today may well live to eat his words as Schiller has done.

The pressure on prices that we mainly thank in the main to currency stability, will decrease when the oil price and the dollar achieve their own stability.

Then, as previously, consumers will be able to purchase petrol and other items, dependent on oil costs and the dollar, at favourable prices.

But the price reduction effect that has pushed down cost of living increases almost to nothing, will then be suppressed. Price buoyancy, unchanged or only moderately so for many other goods and services, will come to an end and no longer be a compensating factor.

Put another way the domestic aspect of price increases, estimated at a good two per cent at present, will then fully affect the cost of living index. This will certainly happen in a year's time at the latest.

But it would be absurd to talk of a revival of inflation. It will be nothing more than a technical reaction to the current "dent" in prices.

Even a price increase of 2.5 per cent, compared with previous inflation rates of seven to eight per cent, can be regarded as a political success.

It can only be sustained if the current illusion of finally have got the better of inflation doesn't lead to recklessness.

The Bundesbank is certainly aware of this problem. Which is reassuring.

*Claus Dertinger*

(Die Welt, Bonn, 29 March 1986)

# Third World whoops as oil takes a drop

RHEINISCHER MERKUR

Man Said Oteiba, the United Arab Emirates' oil minister, says oil prices might drop to $5 a barrel. That is even less than the $8 forecast by the Saudi Arabian oil minister Sheikh Yamani.

Consumer countries have control of oil prices. According to Oteiba their three months stockpile is having its effect.

He believes that there is no limit to the extent oil prices could drop if the Opec countries exceed their production quotas, but it is unrealistic to expect more discipline in their oil production.

Opec countries curbed production from 1981, when oil last peaked at $34 a barrel, until the end of last year.

As soon as this policy was abandoned, prices plummeted.

The uncertainty created by the comments made by Oteiba resulted in spot market prices in New York falling below $10.

Beneficiaries of cheap oil are West German consumers and an inflation rate that is moving towards nil. Without cheap oil, inflation would have been over two per cent.

Many developing countries have also benefited. They will no longer have to meet high oil bills.

But one man's joy is another's misery. The oil producing countries in the Third World have to deal with losses running into billions.

The main sufferer is Mexico. In this year alone from an oil price of $13 a barrel Mexico has had to set aside between $6 and $7 to meet its creditors' interest charges.

The North Sea oil producers have also been hard hit.

In America, where the oil industry has been in recession since 1983, alarm bells are ringing in the banks.

According to statements made in the US a third of the energy banks, that is financial institutions that have placed at least a quarter of their credits in the energy sector, are in a dangerous financial position or at the very least badly hit by the decline in oil prices.

More and more debtors are unable to meet their commitments.

Although the decline in the oil price brings with it more good than bad, there are no grounds for extreme euphoria.

The West German Foreign Trade Association in Bonn warned that the Opec countries would lose the importance they had as growing export markets.

Their proportion of West Germany's total exports has dropped from nine per cent at the beginning of the 1980s to just five per cent in 1985.

There are also fears among Western industrialists that oil exporter Russia will have to brake imports because of a lack of foreign exchange.

Another alarming aspect could be that the enthusiasm the industrialised nations have shown for energy-saving will be forgotten.

The low oil prices also halt exploration and exploitation activities in the international oil industry.

In the medium term this could bring about the threat of considerable dependence on the oil-rich Opec bloc.

*Heike Braun*

(Rheinischer Merkur/Christ und Welt, Bonn, 5 April 1986)





■ SPACE RESEARCH

# Cost-conscious Bonn is reluctant to jump on the Hermes bandwaggon

RHEINISCHER MERKUR

For European space research the *Challenger* catastrophe came as a stroke of luck. Cynical though it may sound, the facts are clear.

With space shuttle flights delayed for at least a year, international customers are showing even keener interest in the European Space Agency (Esa) and its Ariane 3, the only satellite launching system currently available.

At the end of March the 17th Ariane 3 was successfully launched from Kourou, French Guayana, with a payload of two satellites, one American, the other Brazilian.

*Both — the US G-Star 2 and Brasilsat S 2 —* were put into geostationary orbit.

Esa's order books are full. Thirty-two satellites are on the waiting list. Launching them will be worth roughly DM3bn in orders.

While the Esa management rub their hands in glee, their political sponsors in European capitals face far-reaching decisions.

If European space research is to have a future it cannot rest on its laurels; there must be more to it than Ariane and launching satellites.

In January 1985 the Esa Council of Ministers accordingly decided in favour of more than mere specific projects in the framework of a 10- to 15-year space plan.

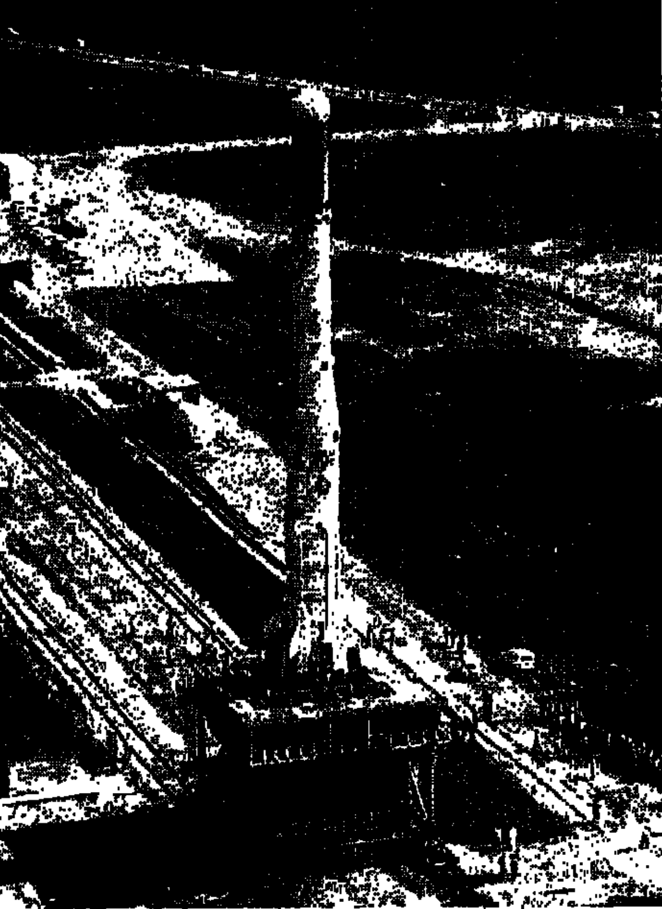
It was to be based on Columbus, the European contribution to the proposed US space platform, and the Ariane 5, a larger version of the launcher rocket.

The Ministers agreed on a long-term political objective: that of ensuring Western European autonomy in both manned and unmanned space research.

This longer-term decision is particularly important for Bonn as a crucial boost to the political, economic and cultural part Europe will be able to play in world affairs in the next century.

The trend as Bonn sees it is double-edged, as it were. Unless the Federal Republic makes a point of wielding much greater influence on Esa policy and technology it will merely continue to be a paymaster of European space autonomy with no way of deriving direct benefit from the resulting advantages.

This being so, it is surprising that Bonn is so reluctant to back the development of the Hermes space shuttle, a key feature of plans to ensure autonomy. This reluctance is, as so often, mainly based on financial considerations. Early last year the Bonn Cabinet decided that apart from Ariane and the Columbus project no more large-scale space research projects were to be backed for the time being. So the authorities prefer to take their time over Hermes. Research Minister Heinz Riesenhuber says project appraisal will be completed soon, but carefully avoids stating a specific deadline. This reluctance by Bonn to arrive at a decision has come under increasingly heavy scientific and political fire, especially the latter, and begun to become tricky for the German government. French influence has so far predominated in the design concept and preparations for the Hermes project. *The French are forging ahead partly be*cause of a healthy mistrust of American readiness to cooperate. The Columbus space station is initially to use US space shuttle facilities, but there are grounds for doubting whether the Americans are going to grant the Europeans unlimited access to US facilities.



## Ariane flies high

**The Ariane 3 European launcher rocket en route from hangar to launching pad at Kourou in French Guayana. The 29 March launching put two satellites, one American, the other Brazilian, into geostationary orbit.** (Photo: Brauer)

If they don't, European autonomy in space research will remain wishful thinking, with flights to and from Columbus dependent, in the final analysis, on US goodwill.

US goodwill will in turn depend on the dictates of security and commercial interests. So German participation in the Hermes project would definitely make sense.

The importance it has assumed can be inferred from the fact that President Mitterrand and Chancellor Kohl have decided that Hermes is a matter for top-level summit discussion and decisions.

Irksome side-issues remain. The success of last year's D-1 mission, a space lab launched on board the US space shuttle, has upset the French.

It and the agreement on SDI cooperation have prompted Paris to wonder whether Bonn plans to be more Atlantic or more European in space orientation.

Queries are made discreetly but must be taken very seriously. Fears that Europe might paralyse its own development are by no means groundless.

Experience has shown that over and above fine words and statements of political intent European integration only works where joint projects are undertaken. The Airbus is a case in point.

If Bonn were to decide against Hermes the strain on Franco-German relations would be severe. Besides, the Federal Republic would run the risk of isolating itself within Esa and hampering what has so far been successful European space cooperation.

A decision to go ahead with Hermes would in contrast not only pave the way for a major Franco-German cooperation potential and leadership in Europe; it would also have a beneficial effect on *foreign and security policy.*

Given European uncertainty about the repercussions of SDI on Western European security, such prospects gain in importance.

Herr Riesenhuber is naturally right in pointing out the financial risks Bonn would run in backing Hermes, although experts say the initial expense would be a mere DM30m-DM50m in the first two years if Germany were to foot 30 per cent of the bill.

That is a fairly modest investment in comparison with the DM600m a year the Aerospace Research Establishment (DFVLR) says should be spent on a "national' high-tech space research programme."

The survey Herr Riesenhuber has commissioned recommends German participation in Hermes even if the cost of national research plus Hermes and Columbus totals DM1.6bn between 1987 and 1996, as has been suggested.

Research Ministry officials are currently wondering whether commercial uses of Hermes and the other projects might make them competitive with American projects in the long term.

Above all, Bonn is reluctant to foot the bill from government funds alone. An entirely different view of Hermes might well be taken, it is suggested, if firms interested in contract and development work were to undertake a financial commitment.

Herr Riesenhuber nonetheless frankly says he feels Hermes uses the wrong technology in merely imitating a US system. The French strongly disagree, saying the concepts cannot be compared.

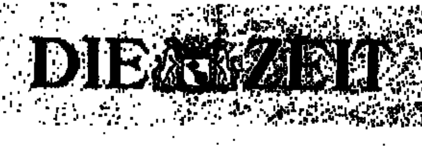
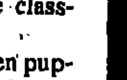
Besides, the technological impetus the project will provide, is surely something Bonn doesn't want to avoid.

The French feel aided and abetted in

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■ THE STAGE

# Bochum puppet theatre institute runs on a shoestring budget

Jürgen Klünder of the German Puppet Theatre Institute in Bochum says no-one knows us better than the dolls, teddy bears and comforting pillows of our childhood.

"We have confided so much of ourselves in them, more than in our parents, brothers or sisters. We clowned about with them and cried with them in bed.

"We held deep conversations with them on rainy afternoons and shared excited expectations with them on trains or on the back seats of cars when we went on holidays.

"We also shared with them our fears of school exams," he says.

These playthings, he adds, could write the biographies of our childhood better than anyone else.

I recall once seeing an old man standing in an archway. I could hear a conversation echoing against the walls. Rattling along beside him was his bicycle. It was his bicycle he was chatting with.

He talked to it as if it were an old friend who would seldom have cause to contradict him knowing as it did the inner depths of his abtruse thoughts. One had the impression that the bicycle had *a mental reality of its own.*

*Klünder refers to this point, saying:* "The secret of dolls and puppets and of their attraction for us lies in our ineradicable, deep-rooted belief that inanimate objects have souls."

Playing with dolls and transforming dead things into living ones is a game with the possibilities of one's own freedom.

It's the retro-transformation of one's own existence, which hangs by invisible threads onto life, into the imbued life of an object.

The boundaries between us and the non-living become blurred, the world becomes complete and whole again.

Certainly this would seem a far cry from Punch and Judy. Klünder explains: "If it could be grasped how playing with dolls interprets and broadens life, and the sensational possibilities this offers, child's play would quickly become a great and exciting art form."

The premises of the institute make a barren impression. They have only just been occupied. The building looks like an old mill-owner's castle but in reality is just a water tower masked in a turn-of-the-century style.

Above, in the two colossal tanks, two auditoriums are being built. The institute wants to have performance facilities.

The building is much more than it appears to be and the same can be said of puppets and dolls, with their ability to hide within each other and to question one's sense of reality. At this stage I have the eerie feeling that the armchair on which I am sitting, the coffee pot, the sugar bowl and milk on the table in front of me may not be what they seem.

"Anything can be a puppet," Klünder says, "anything can suddenly move, become language, become a gesture, live. One only has to take puppet theatre seriously, to take it out of the classroom."

Of course there has always been puppet theatre for adults. One only has to think of the Cologne Hännesche Theatre, the Sicilian "Opera dei Pupi," the Japanese "Bunraku" and many others.

Great works from world literature, such as "Faust," "Hamlet" and the Commedia dell'arte plays were performed throughout Europe, often having their local premieres on the puppet stage.

Though these were often impressive productions they were still substitute theatre, copies of "real" theatre.

And with all due respect and love for this wonderful tradition it is not the purpose of the institute to preserve history and to satisfy museum-like ambition.

Admittedly it is the custodian of a great treasure of old puppets and plays and can proudly claim to have the largest collection of paper theatres in the world.

But the institute has other aims. It wants the tradition to break out into new kinds of theatre, and to awaken puppet theatre from the slumber which allowed the theatrical revolutions of the last decades to pass by practically unnoticed.

Klünder says he wants eventually to see this form of theatre established as an independent art form along with opera, theatre and ballet and for it to be eventually discovered as theatre.

*The Bochum institute is unique in* Western Europe. The publisher and enthusiast Fritz Wortelmann founded it in 1950 and headed it until 1976.

He brought together under one roof everything which a serious institute needs, a historical theatre collection and library, research facilities and also, temporarily, a school.

Four series of books are now produced. They include "Masters of Puppet Theatre" and monographs on major world puppet theatre. The imprint has grown to about 40 titles.

Unlike the only other comparable centres in Eastern Europe the Bochum institute concentrates on puppet theatre for adults.

This form of theatre has its own annual early summer "Fidena" festival, and it has many fans and friends across the globe.

Klünder arrived on the scene by accident, as it were. He studied drama in Hamburg and Vienna and took his PhD. He was sent to Hong Kong as a lecturer by the German Academic Exchange Service.

He discovered while he was looking



Belgian puppet theatre artist Jan Roets and his play *Jack Crash* at the Bochum festival. (Photo: DIR)

into Oriental theatre the age-old Chinese puppet theatre tradition. He came across old masters in exile from mainland China and with neither students nor followers: the surviving relics of a classical tradition.

He made film and tape recordings and returned to Germany, where the Bochum institute showed interest in his findings.

A relationship was established and shortly after Fritz Wortelmann's death he took over as head of the institute.

I asked him what kind of people puppet players are, remembering my impression of the man and the bicycle.

Klünder hesitated a little before answering. "There are various reasons for an interest in puppets. Of course, educationalists, teachers and therapists are most interested of all.

"Many have discovered how contact with puppets can liven up the school routine; how one can learn by playing or talking to mute things. Punch has become more confident, there is now much that is new and experimental."

The developments in the adult theatre, he added, are at the moment the most interesting. "Suddenly we have painters, dancers and actors discovering puppet theatre.

"Young writers are beginning to write for this kind of stage, new material is being worked on. The frontiers of dance theatre and performance are fluid."

The old families of puppet theatre, which had inter-married over centuries, with their wonderful repertoires of Faust, The Beautiful Melusine and The Holy Genoveva, have died out.

Today's players for children have to compete with Sesame Street and the Muppet show.

All the same during summer festivals, Christmas time and other such occasions, there has always been an enthusiastic audience of millions.

The institute acts as an agency in arranging performances and helping young companies to find good engagements.

The situation is more difficult with adult theatre. Important theatres have not shown much interest.

Even Claus Peymann, the long-standing general manager of Bochum's municipal theatres, could not bring himself to occasionally give his old college friend Klünder an opportunity to use his theatre.

At the same time however there are experimental ensembles and individual thinkers and players trying out something new.

There is the Belgian Jan Roets with his "Jack-Crash" performance, which caused a sensation at the last Bochum festival.

There is the Dutchman Feike Boschma with his version of *Daniel Defoe's* "A Journal of the Plague Year," a haunting fantastic play with all possible kinds of puppets.

Subsidies are rare. And of course there is not much left over from the municipal arts budget for the puppet-players.

Like other independent companies they have to work hard for their bread and hold down a second job as teachers at an art, music, or theatre school - sometimes even as a lecturer at the Bochum institute.

Klünder says they dream of [illegible] their own school. They had one once but the money ran out.

In 1977 the puppet theatre college was founded as an adult education facility, financed by the local authorities.

All the same around 15,000 people have enrolled for courses and many new productions were premiered in Bochum.

For those who want to make a profession out of it the play with puppets which shows how a familiar object becomes strange with its own life and stubbornness can bring us to an understanding of alternatives.

The poet Heinrich Heine showed a long time before the protagonists of experimental art that creating art with things made for other purposes can be enormously satisfying.

In his "Baths of Lucca" he des[illegible] the beautiful Franscheska confessing her love story with her feet whil[illegible]ing on a couch.

"The blue foot is Abbate Cecco and the red one poor Franscheska. She parodies her own story by [illegible] her feet which are in lo[illegible]other, to sp[illegible] thei[illegible] [illegible] and strange how th[illegible] other and said the most [illegible]ate things. They continually [illegible] out one another's names, they did not want to separate.

Admittedly that has nothing to do with Punch and Judy. But it has a lot to do with the idea that a bicycle or a sugar bowl can come alive and that one can tell love stories with one's feet.

Puppet theatre offers thousands of possibilities to make the exploited and used world play and speak. It's an art which can be learned in Bochum where the small curtain hangs.

*Benedikt Erenz*

(Die Zeit, Hamburg, 14 April 1986)

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their bids to persuade Bonn to back Hermes by US reluctance to allow German firms to make commercial use of know-how gained as part of their role in the SDI project.

Bonn is gradually growing more willing to endorse Hermes if only the French will reduce their stake to 40 per cent of the project and allow Germany a 30-per-cent stake in return.

Bonn is also keen to see a clear commitment to "Europeanisation" of Hermes within the Esa framework.

*Walter Bajohr*

(Rheinischer Merkur/Christ und Welt, Bonn, 5 April 1986)



■ HERITAGE

# Mad mystery king Ludwig II of Bavaria

**One of the many books published this year to mark the death centenary of King Ludwig II of Bavaria claims he wanted to set fire to Munich, the Bavarian capital he strongly disliked, and sell Bavaria to Prussia because he was short of money, having spent a fortune on his fairy-tale castles Neuschwanstein and Herrenchiemsee.**

The body of Ludwig II, King of Bavaria, and that of Munich psychiatrist Bernhard Aloys von Gudden, were found side by side on the eastern bank of the Starnberg Lake at eleven o'clock in the evening on 13 June 1886.

At midnight a tolling bell confirmed the king's death.

The only facets of the tragedy that are *still not disputed* are the time and place when it happened.

For the past 100 years the "fairy tale" king's private life and death have been the subject of research, legend, song and films.

In this centenary year of the king's death is it likely that myths and fairy tales will be pushed aside to make way for historical truth?

Most of the new books about him published this year in Bavaria claim to do this.

The book by Wilhelm Wöbking, head of the Bavarian crime investigation department, caused a stir when it was launched.

He took four years to research his 414-page book, *The Death of King Ludwig II of Bavaria.*

He gained access to Bavarian and foreign archives and was allowed, for the first time, to examine the secret archives of the Wittelsbach family.

Wöbking claims to have got at the truth after examining police reports of the time, state and diplomatic papers, medical reports, letters unknown until now and statements from eye-witnesses.

He found no evidence to support the suggestion that persistently appears, that Ludwig was the victim of political intrigue or that he was murdered at the behest of foreign powers, Prussia in fact.

He was certainly not shot down trying *to escape.*

Wöbking comes to the conclusion that the king committed suicide in the lake, after he had got rid of his umbrella, *found near the* lake's embankment, and his jacket and [illegible] a consequence [illegible]vours to thwart the king's intention.

The 40-year-old king and Dr Gudden, 63, struggled in 1.30 metres of water.

The king dealt a powerful blow on the forehead to his psychiatric attendant, Gudden was throttled, possibly strangled to death and forced under the water.

Gudden was killed either as a result of the violent blow or by drowning. The king then proceeded to commit suicide by drowning himself.

Looking into the legal aspect, Wöbking says Ludwig was probably certifiably insane. He suffered from schizophrenia. This is not in contradiction of official statements already made.

What is new and sensational about Wöbking's book is that he claims Ludwig wanted to set fire to his unloved



Ludwig II (Photo: TELE-Foto-Bunk)

capital, Munich, along the lines of Nero's conflagration of Rome.

He had given instructions for many city banks to be robbed, and he wanted to sell his country to Prussia because he was so short of money.

Wöbking also knocks on the head the myth that the king was a sensitive dreamer.

Towards the end of his life Ludwig ill-treated his servants, drank large quantities of alcohol and used bad language before his dinner guests.

Reactions to Wöbking's research are various. Hannes Heindl, chairman of the King Ludwig Society, has urged Duke Albrecht, head of the Wittelsbach family, to get an injunction out against the book.

Heindl has asked Bavarian Interior Minister, August Lang, to sack Wöbking, a Westphalian (and hence a Prussian), on the grounds that he has endangered the public peace.

Novelist Georg Lohmeier, spokesman for Bavaria's monarchists, wants the king's body to be thoroughly examined.

Lohmeier, ever loyal to the king, takes the view the Ludwig was the victim of a Prussian plot to kill the king and

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Neuschwanstein, Ludwig's fairy-tale castle (Photo: dpa)

# Frederick the Great of Prussia, the king of contradictions

Frederick the Great, the King of Prussia, died 200 years ago, but he still casts a shadow over European affairs.

An exhibition and a conference have been staged in Berlin to start off the commemorations for the bicentenary of his death.

As soon as the childless Frederick II died, a lonely and embittered old man, at his palace in Potsdam after 46 years on the throne, his historical legend began.

He remains controversial, admired and disparaged, more than any other statesman, for the conflict he demonstrated between power and intellect.

He is buried among the other Hohenzollerns at Hechingen, Baden-Württemberg. A few years ago an equestrian statue of the king was brought out of store in Sanssouci, his palace in Potsdam, and set up with considerable publicity by the East German government on Unter den Linden in East Berlin.

A historical symposium was organised in the Prussian State Library in West Berlin, aimed at throwing light on the "Miracle of the House of Brandenburg," as "Old Fritz" was called, and to debate whether he deserved the epithet "the Great" in view of modern research.

The symposium studied his role as statesman, a general (he was called a musical king with martial inclinations), and as a benevolent absolutist.

It also looked into his relations with England and Russia as well as the United States, until recently an area to which little attention has been paid.

His complex personality and the puzzle he presents aroused considerable controversy among the historians meeting in Berlin, particularly the debate over the idea that he was "the king of contradictions."

Professor Günter Birtsch from Trier maintained that he contradicted himself, often acting as a statesman in contradiction to the Enlightenment with which his name and era are associated. At 16 he wrote to his sister, Wilhelmina, later to be Princess of Bayreuth, that he was a philosopher by inclination and a statesman by duty. He signed the letter "Frédéric le philosophe." At this time he also described himself as the "poet of Sanssouci." Hanover historian Walter Mediger took up this controversial point. Frederick said, "I hate this metier but I love it." This, Mediger maintains, shows that the king had a passion for statesmanship. Mediger agreed with his colleagues that the ambitious Frederick eventually enjoyed power and in his later years suffered from the sense of duty he imposed upon him-



Frederick the Great. (Photo: Historia)

self. Philosophy, poetry and the fine arts acted as a drug upon the king, according to Birtsch. The king's inner private feelings have be separated from his feelings as a statesman.

French historian Pierre Paul Sagave pointed out that Frederick's kingdom was regarded in France as an "enlightened despotism."

The gifted pupil became a great gambler with destiny, Sagave said, recalling that Frederick, after the most serious crisis of his career, the defeat at Kunersdorf in 1759, contemplated a hero's suicide *and gave precise instructions in* German to his generals to this end.

(The French-speaking king only spoke German "with his horse".)

There was repeated reference in Berlin to the research done on Frederick the Great by historian Theodor Schieder, who died in 1984.

Schieder took the view that the king saw world history as "a game of blind chance" which he faced up to. He saw that the king's puzzling personality included much that was repulsive and attractive.

Frederick, who during his life made Prussia a major European power, was the most dazzling embodiment of enlightened despotism in Europe, Schieder believed.

A lecture by the Würzburg historian Werner Giesebrecht dealt with "Frederick the Great and the United States of America," a theme that one woman participant at the symposium described as an aspect "almost totally hushed up."

It was an officer from Frederick's armies, Baron Friedrich von Steuben, who gave considerable support to George Washington in his victories over the British in the American War of Independence.

Giesebrecht said that Frederick was "an interested but reserved observer of the events in North America."

The king wanted to see hated England humiliated, but was careful not to get himself directly involved in the conflict.

In the last years of his life he was anxious to conclude a trade treaty with the young American republic. This was done in 1785.

According to Giesebrecht the ratification of the treaty on 17 May 1786, just a few months before Frederick's death, "gave the Americans considerable pleasure and great hopes, although Frederick himself was silent about it."

*Wilfried Mommert/dpa*

(Das Parlament, Bonn, 29 March 1986)

■ ENVIRONMENT

# Disused waste dumps are chemical time-bombs ticking away all over Germany



Chemicals and micro-organisms can seep from garbage tips into the ground water and be a serious environmental and health hazard. Brunswick hydrologists have examined the risk in closer detail.

Their findings convey a clearer idea of whether toxins and germs have been disposed of for good by being dumped in this way.

They also present a scientific assessment of the threat to ground water resources and its consequences for the operation of garbage tips.

Garbage is certainly a growth industry, with higher consumption leading to larger quantities of waste ranging from plastic bags to coffee grounds and from tins to spray cans.

The current annual total is 30 million tons of household refuse, 26 million tons of sewage sludge and 10 million cubic metres of effluent that cannot be recycled.

As a result, most waste is dumped on garbage tips. But how safe is it there?

Peter Spillmann of the Leichtweiss Hydrology Institute in Brunswick has published the findings of five years of researchby engineers, hydrogeologists, chemists, microbiologists and agricultural scientists.

Entitled The Water and Oxygen Cycle in Garbage Tips and Its Effect on Water Resources, the report was financed by the Scientific Research Association (DFG) and coordinated by Professor Hans-Jürgen Collins.

Garbage tips are one of the ways in which harmful substances most readily seep into the ground water.

There are over 50,000 unchecked old garbage tips around the country where seepage is a potential contamination hazard.

The trend is toward keeping seepage in check by means of garbage compression and drainage systems to ensure that harmful substances aren't so readily channeled into the biological cycle.

The aim must be to specify and quantify local authority garbage, including all harmful substances and their compounds and derivatives.

Two thirds of the country's garbage is still dumped without prior processing or treatment, which is the softest and least expensive option.

Scientists set up a field laboratory at a municipal garbage dump in Brunswick, combining miniature tips of specified garbage and artificial ground water access.

Given identical initial conditions, project scientists gained their first clear idea of "natural behaviour" in rubbish dumps.

The garbage probed was stored in cylindrical containers six metres tall and five metres in diameter, with access from all sides, inspection valves and flexible outer walls.

Ten containers were filled with garbage of various kinds and sealed to represent various categories of rubbish dump.

Categories included compressed household garbage, household garbage and water or sewage sludge, some in soil through which air can permeate, some in between impermeable strata.

Seepage was found to occur from all garbage tips, the exact amount depending on how densely or thickly packed the garbage is and how moist the subsoil is.

Deceptively, the first seepage can take up to a year to occur and — a point of particular importance — in all categories of dump the amount of seepage definitely increases once the tip has been closed.

All seepage contains germs: in waste from doctors' surgeries, in sewage sludge or in such mundane items as disposable nappies that are dumped straight on to local authority garbage tips untreated along with other household waste.

Germs are quickly killed, but only in the middle of dumps where temperatures of over 60° C are reached due to decomposition.

So Brunswick scientists are unable to forecast when dumps will cease to be a health hazard. Germs certainly have a shorter life if garbage is allowed to decompose in the fresh air before being dumped.

In this way germ seepage can be kept to a minimum and the storage density and active life of a dump increased by up to 70 per cent.

The report says no conclusion have yet been reached on long-term effects on water resources. But household garbage and household sewage sludge are unlikely to have any harmful effect when stored at an ordinary dump.

This means a dump where seepage water is largely purified and access checks to ensure that no industrial waste is dumped.

Keeping an eye on old tips is likely to prove expensive, especially where unsuitable, harmful substances have been stored in the past.

Seepage from these tips may still be clean, but some toxins take years to appear: in some cases because they make various chemical transitions, *in others* because it is a while before containers rot.

So ongoing trials in Brunswick and the new DFG research programme on Harmful Substances in Ground Water will deal with the long-term repercussions of garbage tips and seepage.

Until findings are available many old tips will continue to be biological and chemical time-bombs.

*Donné Nobert Beyer*
(Nordwest Zeitung, Oldenburg, 25 March 1986)



# Chemicals in the home are serious health hazards for children

Children are regularly agreed to be a high-risk group in the extent to which they are exposed to pollution and environmental toxins. But how serious is the risk?

Members of the BUND conservationist group's environmental chemicals and toxins group have taken a closer look at the risk in a book entitled Chemicals in the Children's Room.

A crucial aspect of any analysis of the health hazards children face as a result of environmental chemicals is the fact that they don't always use items in the manner intended, as lawyers primly put it.

Children are great experimenters with everyday chemicals. They chew building blocks and toothbrushes. They suck not just dirty thumbs but also sparklers, for instance. They munch modelling clay and taste finger paints.

And as children are quick to react to many chemicals their rooms can easily become dangerous laboratories.

Authors Hannelore Friege, Frank Claus and Margret D'Haese deal with harmful substances in toys such as paints and crayons, modelling clay and balloons, glues and adhesives.

They take a critical look at harmful substances in food, ranging from mother's milk to baby foods, from vegetable purée to kiddies' tea.

They also probe clothing, with the emphasis on formaldehyde, mothproofing, anti-bacterial treatment and dyestuffs, and furniture, including flooring and building materials.

Many parents clearly have no idea of the extent to which their children are exposed to chemicals.

They fondly imagine consumer protection regulations cover household items, but apparently there are no effective regulations for toys, clothing, furniture and floor coverings.

Special provisions for children are found to be few and far between, as is a sense of responsibility shown by manufacturers in the make-up of their products.

These factors make it particularly difficult to combat the risks and this, the authors say, is where legislation is needed.

Manufacturers must be made liable for damage caused by their products. It must be a blanket liability and more than the details covered by conventional guarantees.

It ought to be the manufacturers who have to prove they are not to blame rather than the victims who have to prove their claims for damages.

Consumers cannot be expected to prove a product is harmful; manufacturers must prove they are harmless.

Immediate action advised to deal with the most pressing needs includes a ban on chemicals such as Lindan and binding regulations (rather than mere recommendations) on household goods to enable action to be taken if laboratory findings are unsatisfactory.

Long-overdue regulations must specify exposure limits to harmful substances to protect children and adults from overdoses of heavy metals and organic toxins.

(Nürnberger Nachrichten, 2 April 1986)



■ HEALTH

# Pollen poised for its annual bombardment of hapless hay fever sufferers

Billions of pollen cells are already under way, floating for miles through the atmosphere unnoticed by most of us. But some notice them right away in the form of allergies.

They are microscopic male cells which can cause continual sneezing, tear-filled eyes and even shortness of breath.

Many sufferers who come down with hay fever in early spring can put the blame on the early blossoming of such trees as the alder, hazel, birch, and willow.

For most allergic people the time of suffering begins when the grass blooms. Grass pollen causes about 90 per cent of hay fever symptoms. The other anemogamous plants account for the rest.

An inconspicuous blade of grass can send on the wind about one million pollen seeds. It hopes that at least a few will land on a receptive female blossom which can then reproduce itself.

If however the grass pollen ends up on the sensitive mucous membrane of the nose of an allergic person, then 20 to 50 pollen cells per cubic metre of air are enough to cause sneezing symptoms.

## Bostock's allergy

Lay people call the resulting symptoms hay fever. Specialists would prefer to hear the term pollinosis, because the illness is not a fever nor can the blame be laid on hay.

The name can be traced back to a 19th century English doctor called Bostock. He called his annual bouts of summer catarrh hay fever.

It was the Viennese paediatrician Clemens von Pirquet who discovered in 1906 that the condition was the result of a change in the body's capacity to react.

He proposed the Greek term allergy, from allos meaning other and ergon meaning work.

He was unaware that it was not the pollen itself, but the protein albumen it contained which caused illness in certain people.

These foreign body proteins or antigens as they are called, confuse the defence system of allergic people.

The human defence system can normally deal with the foreign bodies from which it is continually under attack. They are to be found in clothing, food *and cosmetics* and enter the body through the *skin* or by inhalation [illegible]

The defence system destroys with its antibodies on average about 10,000 intruding bacteria cells daily.

In the case of allergy sufferers, too many antibodies of immuno-globulin E are produced. These sit on special defence cells which look gorged and overfed.

The first time a person is hit by antigens he receives no perceivable indication of what has taken place.

The otherwise relatively unimportant immuno-globulin E reproduces itself quickly and specialists say that the person is then sensitised to a specific allergy.

It is only when antigens re-enter the body such as when grass pollen lands on a mucous membrane, that an allergy breaks out.

The body's reaction ensures that gorged looking cells change, become more permeable, and as a result discharge a substance called histamin. This is the fastest most common and therefore most important type of allergical reaction.

Some of its consequences are weals on the skin, swollen mucous membranes, sneezing attacks and runny eyes. It also narrows the respiratory tract making breathing more difficult and often causes asthma attacks.

If the circulation also collapses the person can experience a shock with deadly consequences. Even small quantities of antigens can cause such a reaction.

Luckily enough it seldom occurs. However it is unforseeable and every doctor dealing with allergies is prepared for such a collapse of circulation.

Apart from plant-pollen, allergies can be caused by numerous substances in our environment. Hay fever is the most common complaint though.

It is estimated that one in every ten people is affected. The figure for young people and children is even higher. Hay fever is very much an illness of the young.

Hay fever is inclined to become less troublesome with increasing age and can with time even completely disappear.

Statisticians have been struck by the increase in its occurrence in recent years. In the 1920s only one in a hundred had the complaint.

Scientists know that hay fever is linked to a hereditary disposition. Identical twins provide evidence for this.

Interestingly they do not by any means react to one and the same antigen. Even their symptoms are quite different.

Specialists lay the blame for allergies and their general increase on the environment. Swedish scientists have found out that cigarette smokers are more sensitive to antigens because the threshold for a reaction is reduced.

They also attribute a similar effect to particular unknown constituent parts of vehicle emission.

They feel certain however that static emission from factory and domestic output of sulphur dioxide — makes people more sensitive to environmental substances breathed in by the body.

Polluted air alone does not account for the increase in allergies. An increased number of diverse chemical substances apparently also play a role.

The hundreds of new substances which appear every year all have an effect on our immune-system, forcing it to continually adapt and in doing so increasing the number possible antigens.

Changes in eating habits also make their contribution. Exotic spices, fruit and vegetables have increased nutritional allergies which are passed on via the intestinal tract.

The power grabbing King Richard the Third's nutritional allergy is a famous example. Taking advantage of his allergy he requested the out-of-favour Lord Ely to fetch him some some strawberries from his garden.

The King had hardly eaten them when he his forearm swelled up turning a burning red colour. The King accused Ely of sorcery and had him executed at once.

The number of sufferers from food allergies is uncertain because many illnesses of the intestinal tract are not diagnosed as allergies.

The Allergy Association in Mönchengladbach estimates that the figure goes into the millions.

The association recently brought out a special menu to give guidance to restaurant owners and chefs about effects of certain foods.

For most people and above all for small children cow-milk is the worst culprit. Doctors are now inclined to urge mothers to breast feed their babies for the first six months.

Babies can then take in a lot of defence substances but as good as no antigens.

Scientists also suspect that allergies are increasing because in the 1970s few mothers breast fed their babies and unnecessarily exposed their children to allergy causing substances.

After nutritional allergies, contact allergies are the complaints dermatologists are increasingly coming across.

Professor Karl Heinz Schulz, a Hamburg allergy specialist, says five per cent of women and girls are allergic to nickel, a metal common in fashion jewellery. It is also common in the metal on jeans and therefore also puts men at risk.

The spot where the skin is touched breaks out in irritating blisters or eczema.

Textiles and above all cosmetics are increasingly causing hypersensitiveness.

Mascara or other cosmetics have caused painful swelling of the eyelids of women.

Dr Schulz demands therefore that all cosmetic products have a description of what they actually contain. Only then can a repetition of the complaint be avoided. Up till now changing one's cosmetic has meant running the risk of being exposed anew to the allergy causing substances.

Contact and inhalation allergies as occupational illnesses become particularly problematic. They head the list for occupational illnesses and are particularly common among hairdressers, chemical workers and laboratory technicians.

They often appear quite late and force the allergic person relatively late to change his job.

Allergies cause fatigue and a decline in performance and concentration. For a motorist this could be deadly and doctors want naturally want to lessen the effects.

For animal-hair allergies the removal of the animal from the immediate vicinity is often enough.

In the case of pollen sufferers a complete recovery is often made thanks to a process called hypo-sensitisation.

After the doctor has found out the cause of the complaint with a skin test, the body is given, over months sometimes years, the substance in ever increasing doses.

The patient gradually learns to prevent the antigen-antibody reaction with his own immune system.

In addition the patient can with the help of pollen-count forecasts and when the need arises he protect himself with medicinal aids.

*Hypo-sensitisation does not always* work. Dust allergies seldom respond to treatment.

It is now known that a microscopic mite virtually invisible to the naked eye is the culprit. The actual antigenic substances in the insect's secretions have also been identified.

## Doctors in the dark

Yet the only usual solution is to change fibre mattresses for synthetic ones, to give up the continental quilt, to take out the carpeting and to install leather-upholstered furniture.

Insect allergies, particularly from wasp and bee toxins have a hypo-sensitisation success rate of nearly 100 per cent. Such allergies should therefore at all costs be treated.

Doctors are still very much in the dark as to the role psychosomatic reasons play.

Patients repeatedly confirm that their allergies are more severe under conditions of psychological stress.

Because everyone handles outside influences differently their allergic response to stress is expressed differently. Some people react with asthma, others with skin problems or diarrhoea. On account of that many doctors believe that allergies should be treated psychologically as well immunologically.

Psychological therapy has already had considerable success with bronchial asthma. Perhaps even hay fever can be improved if the psychological influences play a role.

It would appear that the last word on allergies has not yet been spoken.

*Inge Malsch*
(Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt, Hamburg, 6 April 1986)

Continued from page 11

take over Bavaria. Cologne history professor Ludwig Hüttl has written a serious biography of the king published by Bertelsmann Verlag.

He goes along with the popular view that Ludwig, artistic and eccentric, had kept politics at arms' length when he ascended the throne. He also kept the real world at a distance.

Hüttl found in the archives confirmation that Ludwig went to pieces at the foundation of the German Reich in 1871 when Bavaria lost its sovereignty.

He has also disproved the view that Ludwig ruined state finances by building his famous castles. He financed them from his private funds, albeit running dry.

Two recent publications deal with these castles: *In King Ludwig II's Tracks* (Prestel Verlag), and *Ludwig II's Royal Castles in Bavaria*.

The illustrated *Royal Landscapes — Ludwig II and his Bavaria* (Objektiv Verlag) seeks to give insights and impressions of Bavaria from the nomadic king's standpoint.

Another publication from Süddeutscher Verlag includes 150 contemporary poems and songs about, to and for King Ludwig.

*Karl Stankiewitz*
(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, Cologne, 14 March 1986)

■ MEDIA

# The video kids and how *not* to get them interested in a good book

**In the age of the new media and a generation of young people who take them for granted Würzburg freelance journalist Dorothea Keuler takes a personal look at competition between video and computer electronics and the printed word.**



I have got rid of my television. What has been shown on TV recently has for the most part not interested me. I cannot stand the endless series.

There is more and more sport instead of films (for example, tennis instead of Francis Durbridge). There is less and less comment on serious affairs, and arts programmes are only screened late at night.

Please don't misunderstand me. I don't want to carry on about television in the way so many culture snobs do. For them television is the "goggle box." Programme planners are responsible not the medium itself.

As a child I loved television and I would not have been at all pleased if I had been told it wasn't good for me, as parents do today, with the best intentions of course.

The weekend was made for me enjoying Robinson Crusoe's adventures on television. With considerable pleasure I watched a lot of television during the week as well, without any stultifying effect automatically coming into play. Many parents, keen on literature, fear that too much television will have this effect on their children. They fear that their children will get no pleasure from reading because they watch too much television before they have even acquired an interest in books. But casting about blame by expressions such as "Big Brother in the box undermines the written word," or "books are falling by the wayside" doesn't help, no matter how good it might sound with the public at large. To be fair to our television it is an oversimplification to say, as is said so frequently in current discussions, that "reading is creative and television stupifies.". In fact it is not so easy to verify empirically the stubborn and widespread rumour that children's pleasure in reading has declined because of television. Television viewing is declining, not increasing. A recently published study commissioned by a television advertising group shows that adults watch 20 minutes per day less and children 13 minutes less than they did 10 years ago.

If children prefer television and watch more of it, there are fewer of them that watch television more than they did. 13 are quite content with only one hour's television a day on average.

Young people between 16 and 24 watch about 90 minutes to two hours of television per day.

But television is not their favourite; it is radio, as is shown in a survey entitled "Youth and the Media" and commissioned by the first and second television channels in conjunction with the Bertelsmann Foundation.

According to this study the 12- to 15-year-olds do the least reading. They only had a book in their hands for 25 minutes a day.

There is a minority for whom reading is a pleasure, but this minority figure is stable. *For the past 20 years the frequency of reading has remained constant*, despite more television and better educational and leisure time facilities.

Much can be laid at television's door, but it is not a passive way of spending time, at least not for children.

I recall that the Robinson Crusoe film of my childhood gave me ideas for play and conversation. One cannot regard a medium as passive that provides material that can be used for play, that provides emotional experiences and that can be related to everyday surroundings.

Even if children today do not include Robinson Crusoe in their play but Captain Future, they are not mainly acting out scenes of violence and horror.

The study shows that children who watch a lot of television still regard playing outdoors with their friends as their favourite way of spending their free time.

Television is only addictive if it has to be a substitute pleasure for unfulfilled, but essential needs.

If children have no friends with whom to let off steam or no place to do so, they have to turn to the "box" and work out their energies with it. Switching off solves nothing.

For normal viewers, adults or children, television is the top medium for entertainment. It provides relaxation and a laugh.

A side result of many programmes, particularly certain music shows, fosters a sense of group identity among children and young viewers, strengthening the sense of belonging to a "clique."

I remember watching old films on television. My brothers and sisters and I derived most pleasure from making disparaging comments about them, often to our parents' displeasure.

But it was a measure of their tolerance that despite the fact that we had ruined their pleasure we were not sent out of the living room.

Television was something that we enjoyed together or indulged in so as to relax after school.

As a child I was a passionate reader (and still am). There was for me no competition between books and films. Reading was something I wanted to do, private flights into a fantasy world, to distant lands, other times and to other people.

Children and young people know well enough what they want from their television. Programme choice has become much greater.

Because parents themselves lack childhood experience of the new media they are susceptible to fighting shy of discussion and are prone to prejudices about it.

Television games fanatics and computer freaks are not just hermits hung up on computers, according to sociologist Heinz Hengst, who has been observing what goes on in the computer sections of Bremen department stores.

The combination of competition, speed and the challenge to one's powers makes playing about with computers attractive.

When a young person is bored with a video game he looks for something new.

If it is impossible to exchange video games, and because pocket money does not go far enough to buy these expensive game programmes, young people organise their own black market of illegal copies, so falling foul of the law.

Piracy is strictly at the upper end of the market pricewise, which is why manufacturers and dealers are keen to crack down on it.

When I was young the way to get in on more media pleasure was relatively harmless. I can remember how, because we wanted to see a Robin Hood film, we stuck a label over the warning in the programme magazine that it wasn't suitable for children.

The label said "suitable for children over 13." We marked the edge heavily with a ball-point pen so that the edges of the substitute label could not be visible.

This little deception, for which we were naturally ashamed, did not diminish our enjoyment of our television, and we tried to make good our misdemeanour by good behaviour later.

Nowadays a young person who illegally copies a video film is in real trouble with the law.

Working with a computer, however, has another side to it, particularly when the young person programmes the computer himself.

Computer freaks learn how to "play" with competence that can later be used in a job.

Young people, with their intimate knowledge of the swift *changes in the* video game and film market, are usually way ahead of their parents in this field and are much better able to adjust to changes in the media.

This, of course, effects the relationships between the different generations. In many areas adults are no longer the best informed, "because children have experience of the latest developments which their parents either have not had or have not experienced to the same degree and in the same context," said Heinz Hengst. This is the situation whether it is welcome or not. It is the way things are. Switching programmes off that are considered bad for children would achieve little. It would mean not only switching off the programme but also ruling out examination of a development that could probably be influenced. It would also be ruling out to some extent understanding between the generations. Finally how credible are parents who appeal to the young to read more books and watch less television when they themselves prefer to spend [illegible] ing "before [illegible] box"? Two-thirds of the children asked [illegible] survey in 1977 made this point [illegible] do [illegible] television, which [illegible] have come to love and enjoy without losing a little of their [illegible]. Children need a room of their own they want to be among their own kind.

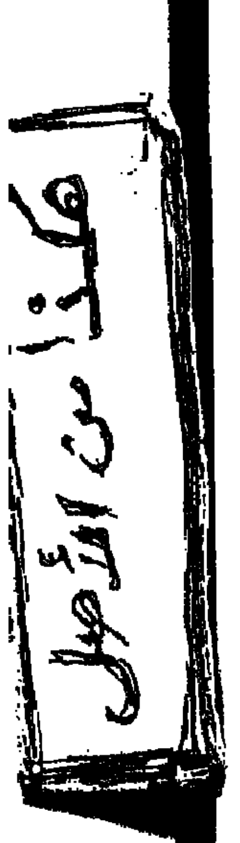
This place of their own they [illegible] find with television, radio, cassette [illegible] cords and computer games, ever [illegible] lable.

Those who want to take these things away from children must replace them with attractive alternatives.

Tübingen media expert Jan-Uwe Rogge feels it is useful to ask why children need the new media rather than make sweeping statements about doing away with them.

*Dorothea Keuler*

(Stuttgarter Zeitung, 29 March 1986)





■ OUR WORLD

# Bavarian he-men test their strength

SONNTAGSBLATT

Bavarians have always had a healthy respect for he-men, with the emphasis on strong-man disciplines performed in beerhalls by rednecked country boys wearing leather pants.

Stone-lifting is as Bavarian as tossing the caber is Scottish, and in the *Starkbier* (strong beer) season muscle-men descend on Munich and the Löwenbräukeller for this traditionally Bavarian test of strength.

Competitors stride onto the rostrum with a swagger. In the haze of beer and cigarette smoke at the tables in the hall, where litre tankards are downed to the accompaniment of brass band music, *roars of approval* and encouragement *are heard.*

The closer you come to the stone, the more keenly you feel the need of encouragement. The grey stone pillar weighs 254kg (559lb).

As you strain and heave at the iron handle a balance tilts and a hand on a scale shows how many centimetres clear of the floor you have lifted it.

*Steinlupfen*, the dialect word for this beerhall sport for all-Bavarian boys makes it sound deceptively easy. So does the term *Fingerhakeln*.

*Fingerhakeln* (finger-hooking) is a game for two. You sit opposite each other, elbow to elbow on the table, link hands and try to push the other man's hand and forearm to the left and flat down on the table.

But I digress. You are up there on the rostrum in the Löwenbräukeller with the spotlights glaring as the audience looks on attentively with bated, beery breath.

The moment of truth approaches, the moment that will sort out the men from the boys. You strain and heave until you can see nothing but stars before your eyes. You can see nothing and wouldn't know for sure whether the stone had budged an inch.

Then you let go, exhausted, and sure enough the stone falls a few inches, so you must have lifted it.

How much? You wouldn't know, and you are so drained of strength that the 24[illegible]10in, proclaimed by the announcer leaves you cold.

You feel sick and tired. Fresh air is *what you need!* You stumble back to your table and you [illegible] the other competitors manage.

Ludwig Frey from the Allgäu, an Alpine region south of Munich, takes to the stage, a Bavarian he-man if ever there was one.

In his short leather pants, costume shirt and walking boots he is well over six feet tall, weighs over 280lb and is broad-shouldered.

All eyes are riveted on him as he takes up position. The most celebrated stone-lifter of all time was Johann Steyrer, a Bavarian innkeeper's son born in 1848.

His feats are legend. He is said to have practised with a stone weighing four hundredweight, lifting it with his middle finger.

In 1879 he lifted a 289.5kg (648lb) stone at the Zirkus Herzog. From 1880 to 1883 he toured Europe demonstrating his strength. Personal effects of this Bavarian Goliath that survive to this day include a 22lb walking stick, an 11lb snuff box and the record-breaking stone he lifted. Bavarians have always been proud of their he-men (and women). Käthchen Brumbach, who was known in the early years of this century as the strongest woman in the world, came from a Bavarian family. In classical antiquity feats of strength that chroniclers recorded for posterity included Milon, who is said to have carried an ox round the 1.5km Olympic stadium racetrack at Olympia on his back, and Bylon, who is said to have shot a put weighing 143.5kg (316lb).

They are nothing compared with the feats recorded by Bavarian writers. Ludwig Ganghofer, for instance, wrote a novel about the life and death of a strong-man, Egidius Trumpf.

Johann Nepomuk Sepp penned an essay about Bavarian strength entitled How Strong Old Bavarians Are.

Meanwhile, back on the rostrum, Ludwig Frey flexes his muscles, bends and grasps the iron handle with hands roughed up by magnesium for better grip.

His groans can be heard loud and clear over the loudspeaker. For a moment his effort seems to have been in vain, then the stone moves.

Initially it moves only a few millimetres, then it slowly edges up until the hand indicates an elevation of between 40 and 50cm.

Frey's veins bulge in his forehead. He pants as he holds the 254kg stone aloft.

He eases the pressure slightly, bounces the stone down a little, then pulls it back up again. He repeats the procedure twice, his body bent back, straining every nerve.

The hand points to 86cm (34in). He slowly lowers the stone into its slot. As he leaves the stage the crowd cheer him.

[illegible] winning," he says. "It's being there with the others." He is an easy-going man and doubtless believes what he says. People as strong as he is are often peaceable, leaving the rough and tumble to others.

Frey and his stone-lifting friends have other ways of proving they are as good as, if not better than, the next man.

They include an Austrian who comes to Munich every year for the Löwenbräukeller competition. He makes Ludwig Frey look quite small — both in physique and in the ease with which he lifts the 254kg stone.

He lifts it 30cm (1ft) off the ground, holds it in position with one hand and orders a beer he drinks in his own good time before lowering the five-hundredweight stone to the ground.

He makes it look so easy that you could be excused for imagining there is nothing to it and it is all just for show. But Bavarians know it isn't, and the spectators raise their tankards in respect to a local lad who has boosted their collective ego.

*Detlef Vetten*

(Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt, Hamburg, 16 March 1986)




A 254kg stone lifted 71.5cm at the national championships in Irschenberg, Upper Bavaria. (Photo: dpa)

# Hot seats at village inn

Four Bavarians in a village near Munich have been fined for setting fire to the chair of a fellow-villager who had fallen asleep in the village inn where they were carousing.

They pleaded guilty but said it was a popular practical joke in Bavaria. The police failed to identify the chair where it had happened because every other chair in the inn was charred in this way.

The victim was a 49-year-old farmer who fell asleep after drinking an unspecified but no doubt substantial quantity of beer. As he lay snoring, his head on the table, the accused lit paper under his chair, but the fire failed to wake him.

His jacket and pants were singed but he snored on regardless. He was only roused when one of the accused pulled his shirt out of his trousers and set fire to it with a cigarette lighter.

His clothes burnt like tinder and despite being doused with a few tankards of ale his burns were so serious that he was in bed for for weeks and off work for a further six.

The police's failure to identify the burnt chair as an exhibit seemed to bear out the claim made by the accused that setting fire to a tired drinker's chair was standard practice in their part of Germany.

The court found them guilty of damage to property and grievous bodily harm and fined them DM600 each.

The fine was light in view of their defence, but they promised to abandon this particular time-honoured custom in future.

*W. P. Schaefer*

(Kieler Nachrichten, 26 March 1986)